

Chess Trivia and Oddities

by Bill Wall

In 1475, the first recorded chess game was made. The game, with the Center Counter Defense opening, was played between Francesco di Castellvi and Narciso Vinyoles in Valencia.

In 1497, the Italian Dominican monk Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498) publically burned chess sets in an auto-da-fe.

In 1497, Luis Ramirez de Lucena (1465-1530) published *Repeticion de Amores y Arte de Ajedrez*, the first book using modern chess.

In 1500, the manuscript *De ludoscachorum* (On the Game of Chess) was written in Latin by the mathematician and Franciscan friar Luca Pacioli (1447-1517). The 96-page manuscript contains 49 pages of over 100 chess problems, drawn in red and black. The manuscript was dedicated to Isabella d'Este (1474-1539). The manuscript was originally lost, but rediscovered in 2006.

In 1513 *Scacchia Ludus* (The Game of Chess) was written by Marcus Antonius Hieronymus Vida (1490-1566), Bishop of Alba, in Latin. He is the first to mention Tower and castle (rook). The poem inspired Sir William Jones's *Caissa*, the goddess of chess. It describes a chess game between Apollo and Hermes.

Atahualpa (1497-1533) was the last sovereign emperor of the Inca Empire. In 1532, the Spaniards sacked the Inca army camp and imprisoned Atahualpa. While in prison, he was taught chess by the Spaniards and became very good at it. Atahualpa advised Hernando de Soto in one game of chess that helped defeat one of the Spanish friars named Riquelme. Popular tradition in Peru says that Atahualpa would not have been condemned to death if he remained untutored in chess. Atahualpa was sentenced to death by 13 votes for and 11 against. It was Riquelme's vote that broke the tie that called for the death sentence. The Peruvian people say that Atahualpa paid with his life for the checkmate that Riquelme suffered because of his advice. [source: Betanzos, *Relacion de Inca Atahualpa de don Francisco Pizarro*, 1535]

In 1549, Pope Paul III (1468-1549) played chess with Paoli Boi (1528-1598), one of the strongest chess players in the world. The pope offered to make Boi a cardinal for his chess activities, but he refused. Later, Pope Pius V offered him a priesthood, but he declined.

In 1549 the Protohierarch Sylvester (chaplain to Ivan the Terrible) wrote that those who play chess shall go to hell and be accursed on earth. This was documented in his work *Domostroi* (Household Government), a book of principles of family life. This was the first printed book in Moscow. (source: Murray, *A History of Chess*, p. 381)

In 1551, Ivan IV "the Terrible" (1530-1584) banned chess in Russia.

In 1604, Alessandro Salvio (1575-1640), a leading Italian chess player, published a chess book in Naples. The book was republished in 1634.

In 1614 Arthur Saul (1580-1618) published *Famous game of Chesse-play*. It classified different kinds of mate, including stalemate and scholar's mate, and fool's mate.

In 1622, chess expert Gioacchino Greco (1600-1634) was robbed of all his money (5,000 crowns or about \$2,000) that he won in Paris from playing chess while on his way to London. He was also nearly murdered. He died of disease in the West Indies. He was surnamed Cusentino and more frequently il Calabrese.

In 1650, Venetian merchants were playing correspondence chess against Creation merchants.

In 1681, the Café de la Regence opened and was an imported center of chess until 1916.

In 1711, chess was prohibited in the Jewish community of Frankfurt, Germany, for 14 years after the Great Fire in the city.

In 1715, the first chess club in London, at Slaughter's Coffee House, was founded. It remained the most respected chess club until 1750.

In 1732, Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) wrote, but did not publish, an outline of his *Morals of Chess*.

In September 1733, in the *Craftsman* newspaper, there appeared a paper with the title of "A Short Essay on the Game of Chess." In reply, Reverend Lewis Rou, pastor of the Huguenot (French Protestant) Church in New York, wrote "Critical Remarks upon the letter to the Craftsman," dated December 13, 1734. The manuscript, now lost, is the oldest reference to chess in the New World. (source: *New York Times*, Aug 2, 1902, p. 8).

In 1734, Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) played the first reported chess game in America.

In 1735, Captain Joseph Bertin (1690-1736) wrote *The Noble Game of Chess*. The book was only sold at Slaughter's Coffee House in London. It is considered the first worthwhile chess book in the English language.

In 1736, Francois-Andre Danican Philidor (1726-1795) learned chess.

In 1737, Philipp Stamma (1705-1755), a pioneer of modern chess, printed a chess book in French in France. It contained 100 chess games in algebraic. An English translation was published in 1745.

In 1740, Legall de Kermeur (1702-1792) taught chess to Philidor. Legall was possible the best chess player in the world from 1730 to 1755.

In 1745, Edmund Hoyle (1672-1769) published his first edition of games, which included a chess section.

In 1749, Philidor published his chess book, *Analyze des Eschecs*, in London.

In 1750, *Chess Made Easy*, an English edition of Greco's work, was published in London by an anonymous author.

In 1752, Benjamin Franklin wrote in a letter that his chess-playing partner, David Martin (1696-1751) of Philadelphia, had died. Martin was a Professor of Greek and Latin for the Academy and College of Philadelphia.

In 1755, Philidor beat his chess teacher, de Legall, at the Café de la Regeance.

In September 1759, chess was first mentioned and played in Canada. Chess was played between two generals on their way to the taking of Quebec.

In 1760, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) played chess with Louis Francois (1717-1776), Prince de Conti, winning both games.

In 1761, Hoyle published an essay on chess. (source: Murray, *A History of Chess*, p.850).

In 1762, Benjamin Franklin played chess with his friend, William Bartram (1739-1823). (source: *Chess Review*, January 1962, p. 18)

In 1763, Giambattista Lolli (1698-1769), an Italian chess player, published his book on the theoretical-practical views on the game of chess.

In 1765, the *History of Chess* was published by Robert Lambe (1711-1795) anonymously in London.

In 1769, Domenico Lorenzo Ponziani (1719-1796) published, in Italian, *The Incomparable Game of Chess*. Ponziani was an Italian law professor, priest, an chess player.

In 1769, Wolfgang von Kempelen (1734-1804) presented to Maria Theresa (1717-1780) of Austria, the chess-playing automaton called The Turk.

In 1770, Slaughter's Coffee House was deserted by chess players. The players migrated over to the Salopian Coffee House. By 1774, chess players left the Salopian and gather in a house in St. James' Street. This became the first English chess club, created under the influence of Philidor. (source: *BCM*, January 1903, p.2)

In 1772, Sir William Jones (1746-1794) published his poem, *Caissa*, in Oxford.

In 1774, the Parsloe's Chess Club was founded in London at Parsloe's Coffee-House on St. James Street. It was limited to 100 members. It was the first properly organized chess club that was founded in England. It closed in 1825. (source: Murray, *British Chess Magazine*, Oct 1907, p. 446)

In February 1775, Philidor gave chess lesson at Parsloe's in London for 1 crown.

On Dec 25-26, 1776, General George Washington crossed the Delaware River with his 1,400 troops on the way to Trenton, New Jersey. The 1,500 Hessian troops, camped in and around Trenton, were attacked and decisively defeated by the American Continental Army. The Hessians had supposedly let their guard down to celebrate the Christmas holiday, and the British commander, Colonel Johann Gottlieb Rall (also spelled Rahl) (c. 1726 — December 26, 1776) himself was misled by John Honeyman, a spy of Washington who convincingly posed as a loyalist. According to one account, Rall was busy playing chess (though some say cards) the night before the attack at the home of Trenton merchant Abraham Hunt when he was handed a note from a local Loyalist who'd seen Washington's forces gathering. As not to be distracted from his game, Rall placed the unread note in his coat pocket. While leading his troops in retreat from the Battle of Trenton, Rall was struck by a musket ball. He died later that day from his injuries. The note informing the general of the attack was later found in his coat pocket. The Battle of Trenton is believed to be the turning point of the Revolutionary War. If Rall had not been playing chess and read the note from a spy, George Washington, Nathanael Greene, Henry Knox, James Monroe, John Marshall (future Chief Justice), Alexander Hamilton, and others may have been killed. [sources: *American Chess Bulletin*, Vol 6, 1909, p.24, *Chess Review*, 1939, p. 157, *Chess Life*, Vol 51, 1996, p. 17]

In 1777, the 2nd edition of Philidor's chess book was published in French and English.

In 1781, Maria Theresa's (1717-1780) successor and eldest son, Joseph II (1765-1790), ordered Wolfgang von Kempelen (1734-1804) to refurbish the chess automaton, the Turk, for the entertainment of Grand Duke Paul, the future Tsar of Russia.

In 1783, Francois-Andre Danican Philidor (1726-1795) played 3 games blindfolded simultaneously. The event was played at the chess club of St. James Street.

In 1784, Moses Hirschel (1754-1818), a German writer and chess author, introduced the O-O and O-O-O symbol for castling. (source: Murray, *A History of Chess*, p. 848)

In 1785, Frederick the Great (1712-1786) played chess against The Turk.

In December 1786, *Columbian Magazine* published Benjamin Franklin's "The Morals of Chess."

In 1787, George Atwood (1745-1807) joined the London Chess Club. At the club, from 1787 to 1800, he recorded his own games and the games of others, including Philidor. This was not a common practice at the time. On June 20, 1795, he took part in Philidor's last blindfold performance.

On March 13, 1790, Philidor played 3 players blindfolded simultaneously, He won all 3 games at pawn odds. Philidor was 64 years old.

On February 2, 1794, Philidor played several chess games blindfolded simultaneously. He was 68 years old.

In 1795, the first German chess handbook was published by Johann Baptist Allgaier (1763-1823) in Vienna.

In 1798, Alexandre Deschapelles (1780-1847) took up chess at the Café de la Regence.

In 1799, Napoleon (1769-1821) played chess with General Beauvoir at Mantua, Italy.

1800 was the last time a stalemate was a win for the side whose King is stalemated in England.

In 1801, Domenico Ercole Del Rio (1718-1802), and Italian lawyer and author, prepared a manuscript for publication, but it was not published until 1984, after the manuscript was found in the Cleveland Public Library. It was titled *La Guerra degli Scacchi, o sia Il Re de Giuochi*.

In 1802, the first American book devoted solely to chess, *Chess Made Easy : new and comprehensive rules for playing the game of chess*, was published, printed, and sold in Philadelphia by James Humphreys (1748-1810). It is a reprint of an earlier London edition of Philidor's *Analyse du jeu des echecs*. It contained 97 pages. The American book also contained Benjamin Franklin's essay, *The Morals of Chess*.

In 1803, the Berlin Chess Club was founded. Military personnel were prohibited from being members of the chess club. Players were not allowed to talk politics.

In 1804, the earliest known correspondence game was between a Prussian army lieutenant colonel named Freidrich Wilhelm von Mauvillon (1774-1851) stationed at Breda, Netherlands, and one of his friends stationed at The Hague (Den Haag), Netherlands. The two cities were about 40 miles apart. Mauvillon's chess games (winning two and drawing one) were published in his chess book in 1827.

In 1805, Johann Nepomuk Maelzel (1772-1838), a Bavarian musician, bought the half-forgotten automaton chess player, The Turk, from Wolfgang von Kempelen's son for 10,000 francs. He then took it from Vienna to Paris and sold it to Eugene de Beauharnais (1781-1824) at a large profit.

In 1806, Alexandre Deschapelles (1780-1847) defeated the best chess players in Germany. Around this period, he was considered the strongest chess player in the world.

On April 6, 1807, the London Chess Club was founded and held its meetings at Tom's Coffee-house, in Cornhill. Augustus Hankey was the first President. In 1852, the club was replaced by the City of London Chess Club.

In 1808, *A Treatise on the Game of Chess*, by Jacob Sarratt (1772-1819), was published in London in two volumes. It is the earliest reference to the term "J'adoube" (I adjust). Sarratt adopted the title "Professor of Chess."

In 1809, the Zurich chess club (Schachgesellschaft Zurich) was founded. It is the oldest chess club in the world.

In 1810, the first opera with a chess theme was performed. The opera, *Das Schachturnier* (the chess tournament), was composed by Traugott Eberwein (1775-1831).

In 1811, Eugene Rose de Beauharnais (1781-1824), Napoleon's stepson, bought The Turk automaton for 30,000 francs.

In 1812, chess clubs were formed in Dusseldorf, Germany and Hereford, England.

On July 9, 1813, the first newspaper chess column was published in the *Liverpool Mercury*. It ran until August 20, 1814. The column was written by Egerton Smith (1774-1841), the founder of the newspaper in 1811. It was also the first weekly publication.

In 1814, Tiruvenkata (Trevangadacharya) Acharya Sastri (Shastri, Shastru)) wrote *Essays on Chess*, published in Bombay. It was the first source of Indian chess problems. It was originally written in Sanskrit.

In 1815, Napoleon played chess every afternoon while in captivity. (source: *Long Island Star*, Jan 31, 1816)

In 1816, an article called "Introduction to the Game of Chess, including anecdotes" appeared in *Gentleman's Magazine*.

In 1817, Johann Nepomuk Maelzel (1772-1838) repurchased the Turk automaton from Eugene de Beauharnais (1781-1824). He then exhibited in Paris.

In 1818, Major Sylvanius Thayer (1785-1872), the "Father of West Point," prohibited chess at West Point Military Academy (founded in 1802). Thayer himself was a chess player, but was afraid that chess would steal away study time.

In 1819, Archduke Maximilian Joseph of Austria (1782-1863) spent the holidays in England and played chess on most evenings. (source: *The London Times*, Jan 25, 1819)

In 1819, William Lewis (1787-1870) was the hidden player inside The Turk automaton. He met all players successfully.

Around 1820, the Dublin pattern was introduced in chess sets. They were made of ebony and boxwood with fine carved knights. The pattern was marketed by Jaques.

In 1821, the first Russian manual on chess, *On the Game of Chess* was published by Ivan Alexandrovich Butrimov (1782-1851).

In 1822, the Zurich Chess Club played against the Winterthur Chess Club at Baltenswil. It was the first ever Swiss club match. Zurich won, scoring +41 -35 =5.

In 1823, George Walker (1803-1879) wrote the first chess column to appear in a magazine, the *Lancet*. Due to lack of popularity, the chess column disappeared after less than a year. Walker was also the editor of England's first chess magazine, *The Philidor*, in 1837. Only six issues of it were published and it ended in May, 1838. It was Walker who was most responsible for recording chess games and preserving them.

In 1824, one of the earliest recorded correspondence games occurred between the Amsterdam Chess Club and the Rotterdam Chess Club. Amsterdam won after winning two games.

In 1824, Alexander Petrov (1794-1867) authored the first chess handbook in Russian (*Shakhmatnaya igra*).

On December 20, 1825, Johann Maelzel sailed for America with The Turk to escape debts and lawsuits.

In 1826, the *Manchester Guardian* sponsored a correspondence match between the Manchester Chess Club and the Liverpool Chess Club. This was the first time that a newspaper sponsored a correspondence match. Manchester won.

In 1827, the first chess club in Philadelphia was formed after the Turk (Maelzel's Automaton) visited the city. Over 100 members enrolled themselves in the chess club in the first week of formation. A few years later, the club was disbanded due to lack of members.

In 1828, the Hyderabad Chess Club of India played the Madras Chess Club of India in a correspondence match. This was the first major correspondence chess match outside Europe. The Madras Chess Club beat the Hyderabad Chess Club 2-0.

In 1829, the Hoyle edition for games stated that "the King who is stale mated wins the game." It was also considered a won game by Philidor and Sarratt. However, at the London Chess Club, the rule was that a stale-mate was considered a drawn game. (source: *London Times*, Feb 16, 1829)

In 1830, the Hamburger Schachklub, the oldest chess club in Germany, was founded.

In 1831, the Lewis chessmen were discovered on the Isle of Lewis. 67 pieces were found. It is the oldest complete set.

In 1831, Alexander McDonnell (1798-1835) became a founding member of the Westminster Chess Club in London. At the time, he was considered England's best chess player.

In 1832, The Turk automaton was exhibited at the Masonic Hall on Broadway in New York. Admittance fee was 50 cents.

Alexandre Deschapelles (1780-1847) was arrested for being involved in the French insurrection of June 1832. He was released after writing to the king that he was too old, too infirmed, and innocent. (source: *British Chess Magazine*, vol 36, 1916)

In 1833, The Turk automaton was exhibited in Pittsburgh. The proceeds of the last evening were given to charity.

In 1834, Jacques Francois Mouret (1780-1837), former operator of the Turk, sold the secret to a magazine (*Le Magasin Pittoresque*). It was the first authentic revelation of the Turk. The article was called "An attempt to analyze the automaton chess-player of M. Kempelen."

In 1834, Louis-Charles Mahe de la Bourdonnais (1795-1840) of France defeated Alexander McDonnell (1798-1835) of Ireland in a series of chess matches. It was the first match of importance in the history of chess.

On January 4, 1835, George Walker started as editor of chess column in Bell's Life that ran for 38 years.

In 1835, the first U.S. major correspondence chess match was played between the New York Chess Club and the Federal City Chess Club in Washington DC. Play was interrupted in 1839 and there was no official result. (source: *Chess Life*, June 5, 1951)

In 1835, the Cambridge City Chess Club was formed. In the 1850s, the Cambridge Chess Club met in the Lion Hotel, Petty Cury. In 1873, the inter-Varsity matches between Cambridge and Oxford began. It lasted until 1915. The Oxford chess club members were the faculty. There were no undergraduate students in the Oxford Chess Club in 1871. (source: *BCM*, 1917, p. 209)

In 1836, *Le Palamede* was founded in Paris by Louis-Charles Mahe de la Bourdonnais (1795-1840) It was the world's first periodical devoted to the game of chess. It ceased publication in 1839, but was revived in December 1841 by Pierre Saint-Amant (1800-1872) until 1847.

On May 14, 1836, Steinitz was born in Prague. At birth, he was named Wolf Steinitz. He later changed his first name to Wilhelm, and eventually to the anglicized William.

On February 6, 1837, on Philadelphia, the Turk automation was finally revealed to conceal a hidden master. This was a secret from 1770 to 1837. (source: *Odd Salon*, Feb 7, 2016)

In 1837, the first comprehensive survey of openings was published by Aaron Alexandre (1765-1850) in Paris. He tried to make a complete survey of the chess openings, publishing his findings as the *Encyclopedie des echecs* (Encyclopedia of Chess). Alexandre introduced the standard notation and the castling symbol.

In February 1838, two correspondence games were played between the New York City Chess Clubs and Washington DC Chess Clubs. In New York, the games were played at Basford's club room. (source: *New York Evening Post*, Feb 21, 1838)

On July 21, 1838, Johann Nepomuk Maelzel (1772-1838) was found dead on a ship in the harbor of La Guaira, Venezuela of alcohol poisoning. Other sources say he died on a ship in the Atlantic that was heading for Philadelphia. At the time, he was owner of the Turk automaton. On September 14, 1838, Maelzel's property was sold at Public auction in Philadelphia. Mr. Ohl bought the Turk for \$400.

In 1839, the earliest surviving correspondence chess game in America is a game from the Washington, D.C. Chess Club and the New York Chess Club. He took at least 10 pictures of chess players playing chess.

In 1839, the New York Chess Club was formed by James Thompson (1804-1870).

In 1840, William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877) photographed two chess players playing chess. It may be the first instance of chess being in a photograph. One photo was published in Nicolaas Henneman's 1847 collection of photographs.

In 1840, Major Carl Jaenisch (1813-1872) left the Russian army to concentrate full-time on chess. Unable to support himself fully through chess, he worked in the Russian Ministry of Finance.

In 1840, Louis-Charles Mahe de La Bourdonnais (1795-1840), strongest player of the 19th century, died penniless in London, having been forced to sell all his possessions, including his clothes and chess books and sets, to satisfy creditors. He inherited some money but squandered his fortune on ill-advised land deals.

In 1841, Howard Staunton (1810-1874) edited the first chess periodical, *The Chess Player's Chronicle*. It was England's first successful chess magazine. It lasted until 1854.

In 1842, Charles Henry Stanley (1819-1901) emigrated from London to New York to work in the British Consulate. He soon became secretary of the New York Chess Club.

On December 18, 1843, Howard Staunton's (1810-1874) victory over Pierre Saint-Amant (1800-1872) in Paris marked the end of French supremacy in chess. Staunton defeated St Amant, 11 wins, 6 losses, 4 draws, in the Paris match. The last game lasted 14 hours. The

stakes were 200 British pounds (or \$1,000 in today's currency). After the match, M. Deschapelles offered to play Staunton for 10,000 francs (400 British pounds), provided Staunton could come up with the same amount of money. (source: *London Times*, Dec 23, 1843) The excitement was so great that a "municipal guard" had to be placed at the door of the coffee-house where the match was played. (source: *Boon's Lick Times*, Feb 24, 1844) There were no allowance to cover Staunton's living expense for 6 weeks, and Staunton lost money on the short term. He did gain bragging rights of being the strongest player in the world. This second match is sometimes considered an unofficial world championship match.

On November 23-25, 1844, a telegraph match was played between the chess clubs of Baltimore and Washington, DC. The two cities were the first to be linked by an American telegraph. Seven games were played by telegraph. The games were played to test the accuracy of the telegraph as well as for the players own amusement. A numerical notation was used (the White pieces were on numbers 57 through 64). The 686 moves which made up the match were transmitted without a single mistake or interruption. The first chess game was played by Mr. Greene in Baltimore against Dr. Jones in Washington. Mr. Greene won.

In 1845, Dr. Peter Mark Roget (1779-1869), devised the first pocket chess set. He called it the stereotic chess and draught board and the economic chess board. He said the set as "adapted for playing games in carriages or outdoors, and for folding up and carrying in the pocket." In 1852, he published the Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases (Roget's Thesaurus), a collection of related words.

In December 1845, Charles Henry Stanley (1819-1901) defeated Eugene Rousseau (1810-1870) in a match, held in New Orleans. It was the first organized chess event of significance in the United States. It was considered the first U.S. chess championship. Stanley wrote a book on the event, but it was a poor seller at 50 cents. The book is now the rarest of American chess tournament books. (source: Soltis & McCormick, *The U.S. Chess Championship*, p. 4)

In 1846, Charles Henry Stanley (1819-1901) published the first U.S. book on a chess match, *ThirtyOne Games at Chess, Comprising the Whole Number of Games Played in a Match Between Mr. Eugene Rousseau, of New Orleans, and Mr. C.H. Stanley, Secretary of the New York Chess Club*. It is the rarest of US chess books.

In 1847, General Romulo Diaz de la Vega (1800-1877) was captured during the MexicanAmerican war and spent his time in the Castle of San Juan de Ulua prison playing chess. He later became the 23rd President of Mexico, but his government lasted only 22 days. (source: Eastern Carolina Republican, May 26, 1847).

In 1847, a quantity of splendid furniture was made in Birmingham, England, for Isabella II (1830-1904), queen of Spain. Some of the items made were chess tables for the Queen. (source: *Scientific American*, Jun 5, 1847, Vol 2, #37, p. 296)

In 1848, the Revolution of 1848 forced Karl Marx (1818-1883) out of Belgium where he was planning a revolutionary action. He was forced to flee back in France, where he spent much of the time playing chess in the Paris cafes. In 1867, when Marx was waiting for proofs of *Das Kapital* to be returned, he spent an evening at a party hosted by chess master Gustav Neumann (1838-1881). At the party, Marx defeated a player named Meyer and the score sheet was preserved. (source: *Tartajubow on Chess*, April 28, 2020)

In 1848, the first open chess tournament was held at Simpson's. (source: Bird, *Chess History and Reminiscences*, 1893)

In January 1849, Henry Thomas Buckle (1821-1862) won the Ries Divan (London) knockout chess contest. It was the first modern chess tourney. It was the first time the word "tournament" applied to a real chess tournament. Buckle was an eminent historian.

In 1849, The Jaques Staunton chess-men were first advertised and endorsed by Howard Staunton. (source: *Illustrated London News*, Sep 29, 1849)

In 1850, Pope Pius IX (1792-1878) amused himself by playing chess with his Cardinals. (source: *Athens Post*, Tennessee, Feb 8, 1850)

In 1851, the "Immortal Game:" was a chess game played between Adolf Anderssen and Lionel Kieseritzky. Positions from that game have appeared in at least 12 movies.

In 1852, the oldest chess club in Holland, the Royal Dutch Chess Society "Discendo Discimus" in The Hague, was founded.

In November 1852, John Watkinson (1833-1923) founded the Huddersfield Chess Club. He was President of the club for 70 years. He was editor of the Huddersfield College Journal. He became the first editor of the *British Chess Magazine* (BCM) and was editor from 1881 to 1887. (source: *BCM*, January 1924, p. 2)

In 1853, a chess game was played using signals at sea between ships for the first time.

In 1854, Paul Morphy (1837-1884) took an interest in astronomy. While at Spring Hill College, he was a member of the Philomatic Society (an association of persons who love sciences) and delivered an astronomy lecture on the discovery of Neptune, which occurred in 1846 by astronomer Johann Galle in Berlin.

On April 24, 1855, The Mechanics' Institute chess club was founded. The building in San Francisco houses the oldest chess club in the United States. At the time, San Francisco was just a frontier community.

In 1856, the Brooklyn Chess Club was founded. One of the founders was Thomas Frere (1820-1900).

In 1857, Thomas Frere (1820-1900) helped organize the 1st American Chess Congress in New York and played in the Minor Tourney. He organized the first Brooklyn chess club. He was one of the organizers of the Manhattan Chess Club. In 1880 he organized the Fifth American Chess Congress. In 1886, he organized the Sixth American Chess Congress. In 1886, he was William Steinitz's second in the world championship match against Zukertort. (source, *BCM*, 1900, p. 98)

On October 6, 1857, the first American Chess Congress started. It was the first true tournament in the New World. Entry fee was \$10. Admission fee for spectators was \$5. The event was held at Descombes rooms, No. 764 Broadway. The winner (Paul Morphy) was considered the United States Chess Champion. (source: *Louisville Daily Courier*, Aug 19, 1857 and *New York Times*, Sep 19, 1857 and Oct 7, 1857)

In February 1858, the Duke of Brunswick brought legal action against the Gazette de-Paris for censuring his practice of playing chess in his opera box. He sued for 10,000 francs. (source: *McArthur Democrat*, McArthur, Ohio, Feb 18, 1858)

In January 1858, Paul Morphy was chosen president of the Chess Club of New Orleans, headquartered at the Mercantile Library. (source: *The New York Times*, Jan 20, 1858) He gave blindfolded simultaneous exhibitions at the club and gave the most careful attention to directing it.

In 1859, a Vicksburg paper said that card playing among steamboat travelers in the West had diminished by one-half within the last year, and its place had been supplied by chess. (source: *Reading Times*, April 19, 1859)

In May 1860, Mrs. Lafayette Lee and Mr. U. G. Flowers sat down to play a game of chess in Vicksburg, Mississippi. During the game, Mr. Lee, who was standing behind Mr. Flowers looking on, pulled out a pistol and shot his wife after a quarrel about Mrs. Lee wishing to visit her mother. He then aimed his pistol at Mr. Flowers, but Mr. Flowers pulled out his own pistol and shot Mr. Lee 5 times, killing him. Mrs. Lee was in critical condition, but survived. (source: *Nashville Union*, June 2, 1860)

In 1861, Congressman Alfred Ely (1815-1892) of New York, while witnessing the First Battle of Bull Run, was taken prisoner by the Confederates and imprisoned in Libby Prison in Richmond, Virginia. While a prisoner, Paul Morphy came to Richmond and visited him. (source: *The New York Times*, Feb 4, 1862)

On October 26, 1861, the first telegraph match played by submarine cable (moves transmitted by telegraph) took place between Liverpool and Dublin. The final result of the match is unknown. The match was played courtesy of the Magnetic Telegraph Company. (source: *Chess Player's Chronicle*, Vol. 20, 1861, p. 354)

In 1862, chess player Armand Edward Blackmar (1826-1888), of the Blackmar Gambit and Blackmar-Diemer fame, was arrested by Union General Ben Butler (1818-1893) and

imprisoned by Union soldiers in New Orleans for publishing seditious (Confederate) music, such as the Bonnie Blue Flag (Band of Brothers) and the Dixie War Song.

In 1862, Paul Morphy joined the staff of General Johnson of the Confederate army. Morphy was at present in Richmond, Virginia practicing law. (source: *The Local News*, (Alexandria, Virginia, Jan 3, 1862)

In March, 1863, Wilhelm Steinitz apologized in a letter (dated March 20, 1863) to Ignatz Kolisch (1837-1889) for not repaying a loan. While Steinitz was playing a match with Blackburne, Daniel Harrwitz took over as the resident chess pro at the London Chess Club, leaving Steinitz with fewer clients to draw money from.

In June 1864, former Union Captain George H. Mackenzie (1837-1891) was marked as a deserter, was arrested, and was forfeited all pay and allowances. He was released in May, 1865, and moved to New York and started playing chess. By 1867, he was U.S. chess champion.

On April 3, 1865, the Richmond, Virginia Chess Club burned down. It has been visited by Paul Morphy, General Edward Johnson, General John Pegram, and General Micah Jenkins. (source: *Richmond Dispatch*, Dec 15, 1865).

In 1866, Wilhelm Steinitz defeated Adolf Anderssen in London, scoring 8 wins and 6 losses. Traditionally, this match marked the beginning of Steinitz's reign as World Chess Champion.

In 1867, Wilhelm Steinitz got in a dispute with Henry Blackburne (1841-1924) at a City of London Chess Club game. Blackburne made an insulting remark and Steinitz spat towards Blackburne. Blackburne, who was over 6 feet and 250 pounds, then smashed the diminutive Steinitz in the face with his fist. Steinitz later wrote, "— he struck with his full fist into my eye, which he blackened and might have knocked out. And though he is a powerful man of very nearly twice my size, who might have killed me with a few such strokes, I am proud to say that I had the courage of attempting to spit into his face, and only wish I had succeeded." In June 1867, Steinitz traveled to Paris where he took 3rd place (Ignac Kolisch took first, followed by Winawer). In this 13-player strong event, Steinitz got in an argument with Blackburne. Steinitz finally spat on Blackburne and Blackburne punched out Steinitz. (source: *International Chess Magazine*, Nov 1889)

In 1867, Jen-Louis Preti (1798-1881) founded the famous monthly chess magazine, *La Strategie*, which he edited until 1875. His son succeeded him as editor from 1875 to 1907. Henri Delaire edited the magazine from 1907 until it stopped publishing in 1940. (source: BCM, 1881, p. 74)

In the Paris 1867 tournament, sandglasses were used. Each player was fined 5 francs for every 15 minutes infraction of the regulated time limit of 10 moves per hour.

In 1867, Charles Ranken (1828-1905) co-founded the Oxford University Chess Club, of which he was elected first president. The other co-founder was Randolph Churchill (1849-1895), father of Winston Churchill. Ranken was editor of the *Chess Player's Chronicle* and co-author of *Chess Openings Ancient and Modern* (1889). He died from an accidental fall of 14 feet over the banister of the stairs in his house. (source: *BCM*, 1905, p. 182)

In 1868, a book by W. R. Henry (1833-1866), *American Chess Nuts*, was published posthumously. His real name was William Henry Russ, an American archivist. He was the first person to collect all chess problems published in America and compiled a manuscript collection. He adopted an 11-year-old girl and proposed to her in Brooklyn when she turned 21. When he rejected her, he shot her four times in the head. He left her for dead (she survived), then tried to commit suicide by jumping into the river to drown himself. Unfortunately, the tide was out and not deep enough. He climbed out of the river and shot himself twice in the head. He died 10 days later in a hospital, lacking the will to win. H

In 1869, the Oxford University Chess Club was founded at the University of Oxford. It is the oldest university chess club in the United Kingdom. One of the founding members was Lord Randolph Churchill (1849-1895), father of Winston Churchill (1874-1965).

In 1870, the first correspondence chess club, the Caissa Correspondence Club, was founded. The club sponsored correspondence tournaments and matches. It initially had only 12 members, rising to 14 members in 1875. The club lasted four years,

In 1870, John Wisker (1846-1884) won the British Chess Championship (known as the British Chess Association Challenge Cup). He won it again in 1872. After 1872, there was no British championship until 1904. He died in Melbourne, Australia after moving there for his health. (source: *BCM*, 1884, p. 134-135)

In 1871, Colonel Hyacinth R. Agnel (1799-1871) died. He was a chess problemist and chess author. He spent the first 20 years of his life as a mercenary. In 1845, he formed the first chess club at West Point. He was a Professor of Languages (taught French) at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point for 30 years. He was also an artist and did his own engravings for his chess books.

From 1871 to 1880, George Henry Mackenzie (1837-1891) won the Second, Third, and Fifth American Chess Congresses. Mackenzie did not play in the Fourth Congress, which was won by James Mason (1849-1905). Mason was an Irishman who had no interest in becoming a U.S. citizen and was never considered an American "champion." (source: Soltis & McCormick, *The U.S. Chess Championship*, p. 28)

In 1872, Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) wrote *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, which was serialized, then made into a novel in 1873. It was his first novel to bear his name on publication. The book describes the love triangle of Miss Elfrida Swancourt, who plays chess, and her two suitors, Stephen Smith (who is just learning chess) and Henry Knight (who also plays chess and beats her).

In 1872, Baron Albert von Rothschild (1844-1911) was elected President of the Vienna Chess Association. He was its president until 1883. In 1897, he was elected as honorary member of the Budapest Chess Club in recognition of the services he rendered to it. He contributed 1,000 crowns as a prize in a Budapest chess tournament. Just before he died, he donated 500 francs for a brilliancy prize at San Sebastian. It was won by Capablanca for his game against Bernstein. (source: *BCM*, 1897, p. 43)

The first Oxford-Cambridge chess match was in 1873.

On June 22, 1874, chess master Howard Staunton died in his library chair, London, of a heart attack. He was 64 years old. The Royal Bounty Funds donated 200 British pounds to his widow after his death. He spent his later life writing about William Shakespeare. At the time of his death, he was writing about the corruptions of Shakespeare's text and working on his last chess book, *Chess: Theory and Practice*, which was published posthumously in 1876.

In July 1874, George Henry Mackenzie won the 3rd American Chess Congress, held in Chicago. There was little financial incentive and only 8 players showed up. The players had to pay a \$20 entry fee. The prize fund was \$450. (source: Soltis & McCormick, *The U.S. Chess Championship*, p. 31)

In 1875, It was reported that Paul Morphy had become insane (source: *Atlanta Constitution*, Nov 21, 1875) and was confined to an asylum (source: *The York Daily*, Nov 29, 1875). The *New Orleans Republican* responded, "Mr. Morphy can be seen on our streets any day, having given up chess-playing for the practice of law." He was never in better health, physically and mentally, than now, and the above news is calculated to surprise him and his friends. (source: *The New York Times*, Dec 1, 1875).

In 1876, Henry Bird (1829-1908) received the first brilliancy prize ever awarded in chess for defeating James Mason (1849-1905) in the New York tournament of 1876.

In 1876, the first Russian chess magazine, *Schachmatny Listok*, was published by Mikhail Chigorin (1850-1908). He founded a chess club in St. Petersburg and tried to establish a chess association in Russia. This was finally done a few years after his death from diabetes.

In 1877, Louis Paulsen (1833-1891) scored first place at a masters tournament in Leipzig. His older brother, Wilfred (1828-1901), a chess master, took last place.

In 1878, Johannes Zukertort (1842-1888) won an international chess tournament in Paris. The first place prize, given to him by the President of France, was a Sevres vase, worth over 5,000 francs (perhaps about \$10,000 in today's currency). A few days later, Zukertort took the vase to a pawn shop and sold it for about 2,500 francs.

In 1878, the automaton Mephisto started playing chess in England against all comers. It beat almost every player except when it played a lady. When playing with ladies, it would obtain a winning position and then lose the game, offering to shake hands afterwards.

In 1878, the Western New York and Northern Pennsylvania Chess Association was formed in Auburn, New York. It retained this name until 1886, when a Pennsylvania Chess Association was founded. The other half became the New York State Chess Association (NYSCA). The NYSCA is the oldest continuously-run chess organization in the United States. (source: *BCM*, 1892, p. 66)

In 1879, the College Chess Club, a women's chess club, was formed. It disbanded after too many marriages (source: *British Chess Magazine* 1981, p. 403)

In 1880, the first intercontinental telegraph match was held. Two games were played between the Liverpool Chess Club and the Calcutta Chess Club. The cost to transmit each move was over 4 shillings for each word, and each move was a minimum of three words. Liverpool won the match with one draw. The telegrams cost each club 30 British pounds.

In January 1881, the *British Chess Magazine* (BCM) was founded. It was edited by John Watkinson (1833-1923). It is the world's oldest chess journal in continuous publication.

In 1881, Frideswide Fanny Beechey became the first woman to win an international problem composing tournament, organized by the *Jamaica Family Journal*. In 1883, she became the first woman to write a chess book on chess problems, called Chess Blossoms. It contained 46 problems of hers, where all but one was mate in two. Zukertort was one of the subscribers to her book. (source, *BCM*, 1883, p. 307)

In 1882, the Toronto Chess Club played the Detroit Chess Club by telegraph. This may be the first telegraph match between the USA and Canada.

On April 26, 1883, the London International Tournament began. It was the first tourney in which double-headed chess clocks were used. Time control was 15 moves in two hours, and if you failed to make the time limit, you forfeited the game. The time piece consisted of two balanced clocks on a seesaw beam so that when one was tilted, it stopped and the other started. The tumbling-clock was manufactured by Fattonini & Sons of Bradford, England.

In 1884, the Scottish Chess Association (SCA), the oldest chess association in the world, was founded.

On July 24, 1884, the estate of the late Paul Morphy, who died July 10, 1884, was sold by auction in New Orleans. Mr. Samory bought a silver laurel-leaved crown, a silver salver, pitcher, and 4 goblets for \$650. Walter Denegre, acting as a buyer for the Manhattan Chess Club, bought Morphy's gold and silver chessmen and the pearl and ebony chessboard for \$1500. Morphy's chess watch was sent to Paris to be pawned. (source: *BCM*, 1886, p. 395)

In 1885, the President of the French Republic, Jules Grevy (1807-1891), offered an expensive Sevres vase as a prize for a correspondence chess tournament between France

and Algeria. The estimated value of the vase was 5,000 francs. The only stipulation was that it barred all players resident in Paris. (source: *BCM*, 1885, p. 105)

In 1885, Colonel Isaac H. Trabue (1831-1907) held a chess tourney funded by pineapples in Florida. He and his whole family had a passion for chess. Trabue was a lawyer, coal mine operator, Union soldier during the US Civil War, and land developer. His younger brother, William Trabue, was a national chess master. His nephew, Stepehn Trabue, once defeated Capablanca in an exhibition in Tampa. (source: *British Chess Magazine*, 1980, p. 599 and lindseywilliams.org, Nov 30, 1997)

In 1885/86 the St. Petersburg match-tournament, with Lasker, Steinitz, Pillsbury, and Chigorin was played. It was the first international chess tournament in Russia. It was won by Lasker, followed by Steinitz, Pillsbury, and Chigorin. (source: *BCM*, 1886, p. 28)

In 1886, the French actress Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923), the first international stage star, played chess against the chess automaton Ajeeb. She loved chess and lived at the Hotel Chelsea from 1886 to 1900. Ajeeb was located at the Eden Musee, a block away from her hotel. She also played Ajeeb in 1900 and perhaps many times between 1886 and 1900 (losing every time). When asked how she spent her time on long sea voyages, she said she played chess. (source: "Sarah Bernhardt" by Jules Huret, p. 132, patrickgrenier.net/blog.html, *Chess Life*, Jun 1992, p. 12, and *British Chess Magazine*, 1979, p. 302)

In October 1886, the Brooklyn Chess Club was organized, located at 198 Montague Street, Brooklyn. It later moved to the Thomas Jefferson Building on Court Street. Members included Supreme Court judges and a Catholic bishop. (source: *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Aug 15, 1909, p. 21)

Calvin Coolidge (1872-1933) played chess. In his diary in 1886, he wrote, "played chess with Dal and beat him every game (February 25). (source: *The Tormented President: Calvin Coolidge* by Robert Gilbert, 2003, p. 14)

In July 1887, Frederick Viewig, manager of the Eden Musee in New York, was arrested for having violated the Sunday law by exhibiting wax figures, permitting music to be played, and also by allowing Ajeeb, the chess automaton, to play a game of chess. He responded, "I consider it absurd to contend that a playing a game of chess or looking at was figures was a violation of the Sunday law." Mr. Viewig had to pay \$100 for bail. (source: *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 16, 1887)

In 1887, Henry Charlick (1845-1916) won the first Australian Chess Championship, held at Adelaide. In 1865, he organized the first inter-colonial competition, between Victoria and South Australia. He edited the chess column in the *Adelaide Observer* from 1868 to his death. (source: *BCM*, 1916, p. 335)

In August 1887, a chess match was being played by Major James Hanham (1840-1923) of New York and Franklin Knowles Young (1857-1931) of Boston. Young was supposed to

seal the adjourned move, but made his move instead. Hanham then claimed a draw on the ground that the rules had been violated. The arbiters decided that Young had forfeited his game because of this neglect, but would modify the penalty to a draw. Young then withdrew from the match and resigned his membership in the Boston Chess Club. (source: *New York Times*, Aug 15, 1887)

In May 1888, the Intercollegiate Chess Association was organized. Colleges included were Columbia, Harvard, Princeton, Cornell, and the University of Pennsylvania. (source: *The New York Times*, May 25, 1888)

In 1888, there were 7 State Chess Associations formed in the United States. They were Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Virginia, Indiana, Ohio, and New York. (source: *BCM*, 1888, p. 407)

In 1889, Emanuel Schiffers (1850-1904) became the first Russian to deliver a course of lectures on chess. He gave the first public lectures on chess theory at the St. Petersburg Chess Association.

On January 22, 1890, a fire burned down the building that housed the Chess, Checker, and Whist Club in New Orleans. It destroyed all the furniture and all of the relics of Paul Morphy. A large chess library, one of the most valued in the world, was also lost, valued at over \$15,000. (sources: *BCM*, 1911, p. 85 and *The New York Times*, Jan 23, 1911) The building was repaired and the chess club eventually reached 1,100 members.

In 1891, a new building was built in New Orleans and rooms were installed for the New Orleans Chess, Checker, and Whist Club. The building was on the site of the old one that was destroyed by fire. There were 700 members of the chess club. (source: *BCM*, 1891, p. 4)

In 1891, a team match was played in the Manhattan Chess Club between the bald-headed members and the full-haired members. The bald-head members won, scoring 14-11. (source: *Chess Review*, April 1937, p. 89)

In 1891-1892, Jackson Showalter (1859-1935) defeated Max Judd for the U.S. chess championship. Showalter lost more chess matches for the US championship than any other player. He lost to Harry Nelson Pillsbury twice. He lost to Frank Marshall. He lost to Albert Hodges. He lost to Samuel Lipschutz. (source: Soltis & McCormick, *The U.S. Chess Championship*, p. 45)

The first Intercollegiate team championship took place in 1892, won by Columbia University. (source: *Chess Review*, Feb 1957, p. 35)

On November 14, 1892, a crime occurred at the home of William Steinitz (1836-1900) in Upper Montclair, New Jersey. His previous American secretary and butler, Nathaniel W. Williams, accidentally shot his new German secretary, Ernest Treitel, in the house. Treitel lost an arm. It may have been attempted murder as there was an uneasy rivalry between

Williams and Treitel. Williams then placed himself at the front door and threatened to kill anyone who attempted to leave Steinitz's house. He was finally overpowered and arrested. Treitel survived, but his left arm had to be amputated. In the end, Williams was found guilty of assault and battery with intent to kill. In the meantime, Treitel had died from typhus fever in February 1893. (source: *The New York Times*, Nov 6, 1892, p. 1)

In late 1892, 28-year-old Samuel Lipschutz (1863-1905) defeated Jackson Showalter with 7 wins, 1 loss, and 7 draws. Lipschutz was now US chess champion. Lipschutz then gave up his New York business and his chess career and moved to California for health reasons. (source: Soltis & McCormick, *The U.S. Chess Championship*, p. 45)

On March 13, 1893, Major General Hiram Barden (1824-1893) died while playing chess at the Metropolitan Club in Washington, DC. He was the inventor of the Berdan range finder, torpedo, and rifle. Before the Civil War, he was considered the best marksman in the country. (source: *The New York Times*, April 1, 1893)

In 1893, the *Brooklyn Eagle* newspaper established a chess column conducted by Hermann Helms (1870-1963) from Oct 15, 1893 to April, 1955. (source: *Chess Life*, May 5, 1955, p. 2.

In 1893, Emanuel Lasker (1868-1941) lectured on differential equations at Tulane University in New Orleans. He had lectured on chess at Tulane earlier in the year. (source: *Time-Picayune*, Mar 4, 1893)

In early 1894, Showalter defeated Hodges for the title of US champion. In late 1894, Hodges defeated Showalter to become US champion.

In 1894, Charles O. Jackson of Kokomo, who said he was a former President of the Indiana Chess Association (which was not true), advertised that the Terra Haute Chess Club was hosting a Great Masters Continental Chess Congress on February 27, 1894. He sent flyers to chess players encouraging them to send \$25 entrance fee for this major tournament. Included in the entrance fee was free room and board. Some \$3,000 had been subscribed. But it was a scam. He had run fake tournaments in the past. (source: *New York Times*, Jan 15, 1894)

On May 11, 1894, Austrian-Hungarian chess master Alexander Wittek (1852-1894) died in a lunatic asylum in Graz. He was diagnosed with a "paralytic mental disorder" the previous year. One source says that he committed suicide but another cites tuberculosis.

In the September 1, 1894 *New York Times* issue, an article appeared that a Women's Chess Association of America was formed. The article states that in the spring of 1893, a few women met informally and organized the Women's Chess Association of America. In January, 1894 they elected their officers and had 75 members. They mention that the honorary members include English women's champion Mary Rudge (1845-1919) and Irish women's champion Mrs. Thomas Rowland (Frideswide Beechey) (1843-1919). The club, renamed the Women's Chess Club, was incorporated in 1896. The president was Mrs. Eliza

Campbell Foot and the vice president was Mrs. Winthrop Parker. (source: *New York Times*, Mar 2, 1896, p. 6)

In the 1890s, Peter Hill (1870-1929) of Boston was operating the automaton Ajeeb at the Eden Musee when one defeated chess woman got so enraged that she stuck a hatpin into the mouth of the automaton, wounding Hill. [source: *Time* magazine, Feb 4, 1929].

In early 1895, Lipschutz returned to New York and claimed he never relinquished his title. Showalter then beat him in a 5th US championship match, winning 7-4. This was Lipschutz's last match. He moved to Berlin and died there in 1905. (source: Soltis & McCormick, *The U.S. Chess Championship*, p. 46)

On March 9, 1895, the first cable match between the United States and Britain occurred. The match was between the Manhattan Chess Club and the British Chess Club. Only one of the 10 games concluded by the time the London hall was required to close. The game was drawn. Emanuel Lasker, charged with adjudicating the nine unfinished games, suggested draws on all the boards, which was accepted by both chess clubs. A year later, the first successful cable match between the USA and the UK took place. The USA won 4.5 to 3.5. (source: *The New York Times*, March 10, 1895, p. 6)

In 1895, Beniamino Vergani (1863-1927) was invited to play in the Hastings International tournament of 1895. He was a chess master from Italy. He ended up in last place, scoring only 3 points out of 21. He was so disgusted with his game that he never played in a masters' chess tournament again. He was given 2 British pounds for his efforts.

In early 1896, Showalter beat Emil Kemeny and retained his title. In late 1896, he defeated John Barry and remained US chess champion.

In 1896, Emanuel Lasker (1868-1941) published his first book, *Common Sense in Chess*. It has been translated in 32 languages.

In 1896, U.S. chess champion Harry Nelson Pillsbury (1872-1906) resigned from the Manhattan Chess Club because someone stole his umbrella. (source: *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 3, 1896)

In February 1897, the press falsely reported William Steinitz's death. The headline of the Indianapolis News was William Steinitz Dead. A dispatch from Moscow says that William Steinitz died in a private hospital, where he had recently been placed on account of mental disorder. (source: Indianapolis News, Feb 22, 1897 and New York Times, Feb 22, 1897) The story was retracted several days later after associating chess with brain disease, and that Steinitz was not dead, but hopelessly insane. (source: *The New York Times*, Feb 26, 1897)

In 1897, Harry Pillsbury defeated Showalter in a match and became US champion. In February 1898, Pillsbury again beat Showalter and retained his title.

In 1898, New York businessman Charles A. Gilberg (1835-1898) died of a heart attack. At the time of his death, he had the second largest collection of chess books. Only John Griswold White of Cleveland had a larger collection. Gilberg had over 2,800 chess books. His heirs kept all the books until their purchase in 1930 by Silas Howland, who later willed the books to Harvard University. In 1881, he wrote the Book of the Fifth American Chess Congress. From 1888 to 1894, Gilberg was president of the Brooklyn Chess Club. In 1890, he wrote *Crumbs from the Chessboard*. In 1897, he was president of the Manhattan Chess Club. (source: BCM, 1898, p. 131)

In 1898, Prince Balaschoff hired Samuel Rosenthal (1837-1902) to be his chess teacher for 500 francs a month and 1,000 francs with Rosenthal accompanied Prince Balaschoff when he travelled. After about 6 months, Prince Balaschoff got rid of Rosenthal. Rosenthal complained that he was owed money and took it to court in Paris. Rosenthal brought an action to recover 15,000 francs of pay according to agreements, 1,000 francs for their last journey, and 25,000 francs indemnity for sudden dismissal, and for loss of profits by non-publication of the chess work on which they had been engaged. The court awarded Rosenthal 15,000 francs for salary according to agreements, but rejected all his other demands. (sources: BCM, March 1899, p112 and *La Strategie*, Jan 15, 1899, pp. 20-21)

In January 1899, William Steinitz resigned as an honorary from the Manhattan Chess Club after a quarrel with Judge William Travers Jerome, one of the members. Steinitz took exception to the statement by Judge Jerome that the Manhattan chess club was not a club for professional players. (source: *The New York Times*, Jan 15, 1899, p. 10)

In 1899, some of the strongest chess players in the world played in the 1899 London International. Former world champion William Steinitz finished a tournament for the first time without a prize. It was also to be his last tournament, as he died in poverty a year later.

In the 1890s, Sir Walter Parratt (1841-1924) was able to play a Beethoven Sonata at the same time that he was conducting two games of chess blindfold. Parratt was an English organist and composer. He was a member of the Huddersfield Chess Club and played his blindfold games while playing a selection of tunes on the piano at Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire. He served for a few months as president of the Oxford University Chess Club and for two years was captain of the Oxford Chess Club. (source: Shinn, *Musical Memory and its Cultivation*, 1898, p. 134)

On September 3, 1900, Louis Uedemann (1854-1912) won the first Western Chess Association Chess Championship (US Open) at Excelsior, Minnesota. He won it again in 1902. At the time of his death in 1912, he was secretary of the Chicago Chess and Checker Club and chess editor of *the Chicago Tribune*. He had been Illinois State Association champion. He originated a notation for use in telegraphic chess. (source: BCM, 1913, p. 15)

In March 1901, David Janowski (1868-1927) won the first Monte Carlo international chess tournament. He then lost all his first place money, 5000 francs (then equal to about

\$1,000), at the roulette wheel in the casino the same evening the tournament ended. He had no money left and the casino management had to buy his ticket home.

In 1901, Julius Finn (1871-1931) won the New York State Chess Championship. He also won it in 1907 and 1908. In 1907, a “great, unknown chess player” disguised as Benjamin Franklin, played simultaneously against all who presented themselves at the Franklin Chess Club of Philadelphia. The identity of the stranger was kept a secret until the discomfort of the disguise forced him to unmask. He proved to be Julius Finn. Finn won 10 games, drew 9, and lost only one. (source: *BCM*, 1907, p. 22)

In 1901, Eliza Campbell Foot (1851-1914) wrote a book on chess puzzles, becoming the first American woman chess author. As she was walking across the street, a car came from around the corner at high speed, killing her outright. It was a hit and run driver who was never caught. She was the president of the Women’s Chess Club in New York for 20 years. She was one of the first ladies to teach and promote chess for women. (sources: *American Chess Bulletin*, Dec 1914, pp. 253-254 and *BCM*, January 1915, p. 6)

In January 1902, Emanuel Lasker (1868-1941) gained his doctorate degree in mathematics and philosophy from Erlangen University. His dissertation was titled, *Über Reihen auf der Convergenzgrenze* ("On Series at Convergence Boundaries"). His mathematical researches were based upon his studies at the universities of Berlin, Gottingen, and Heidelberg. His advisor was the famous mathematician Dr. David Hilbert. His dissertation was published in *Philosophical Transactions*. After he defended his dissertation, Lasker was appointed the Mathematical Professor of St. Owens College (merged with Victoria University of Manchester in 1904) in England. (source: *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Jan 5, 1902 and *BCM*, 1902, p. 21)

In 1902, Reginald Pryce Michell (1873-1938) won the British Amateur championship. He played in 8 Anglo-American Cable Matches. He played in the Hastings International Chess Congress for over 20 years. He won the West London Chess Club 8 times. He worked for the Admiralty, and his wife was the British Women’s Champion in 1931, 1932, and 1935. (source: *BCM*, 1926, p. 157)

In 1902, Robert Falcon Scott (1868-1912) built Discovery Hut, located on Hut Point, Ross Island. It contained many artifacts, including a hand-made chess set. The chess pieces were carved from broom handles. The hut was to be protected as an historic site with no relic or artifact to be removed. Around 2003, it was discovered that the chess set was stolen.

In the 1890s, Otto Roething (1865-1915) was a trapeze artist in a German circus. His circus career was cut short by a serious accident. He then moved to New York and became a chess professional, winning the New York State chess championship in 1903.

In 1903, Max Judd of St. Louis won the Western Chess Association (US Open) in Chicago. He was offered to play in Ajeeb, the Automation in New York, but he did not want to leave St. Louis. For 36 years, Judd took part in nearly every American chess congress. He was president of the St. Louis Chess Club for many years. By profession, he was a cloak

manufacturer. In 1893, Judd was appointed by President Cleveland as the U.S. Consul General to Austria, where he was born. (source: *BCM*, 1906, p. 287)

In 1903, Colonel Charles Paul Narcisse Moreau (1837-1916), a French soldier and mathematician, played in the 1903 Monte Carlo tournament. He lost all 26 games without a draw or win.

In August 1903, perhaps the first silent movie about chess, called *A Chess Dispute*, was made. A camera looks on as two dapper gentlemen play a game of chess in a restaurant. One of the players is drinking and smoking, and when he looks away to set down his pipe, his opponent moves two pieces. A fight ensues, first with the squirting of a seltzer bottle, then with fisticuffs, then they knock over the table. The chess players wrestle each other to the floor and continue the fight out of the camera's view. Clothes fly off of each person and flung above the camera. The waiter arrives to haul both of them out.

In September 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919) announced that he would offer a trophy to the winner of the Cambridge Springs chess tournament. While regretting his inability to go to Cambridge Springs during the tournament he expressed his intention of tendering the competitors and committee a special reception at the White House. (source: *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Sep 19, 1903)

On November 30, 1903, a fire destroyed the Brooklyn Academy of Music, which held the Brooklyn Chess Club. The Assembly Room was the locale of the last six cable matches with England. (source: *BCM*, January 1904, p. 21)

In 1904, the first British chess championship organized by the British Chess Federation was held in Hastings. It was won by William Napier.

In 1904, at the end of the Cambridge Springs tournament, the organizers tried to recoup some of their expenses by selling chess boards and sets for \$15. Mikhail Chigorin was stunned at these high prices, complaining that the sets were cheap, not worth more than \$2.50, and the poorly made chess boards were only worth 10 to 15 cents. The sets and boards sold anyway. (source: Andy Soltis, *Chess Life*, Dec 1995)

In August 1904, Jose Capablanca (1888-1942) went to a private school (Woodycliff Preparatory School) in South Orange, New Jersey to learn English and to prepare himself to enter Columbia University. The tuition was paid by Ramon San Pelayo de la Torriente, a Cuban businessman in the sugar trade. (source: *New York Tribune*, Jan 8, 1905, p. 12) Capablanca's interests included mathematics, history, philosophy, and medicine. He was also good at sports (baseball and tennis especially) and aspired to learn to play the violin.

In the autumn of 1904, Siegbert Tarrasch (1862-1934) signed a contract and was supposed to challenge and play Emanuel Lasker for the world chess championship. But while skiing, Tarrasch fell and suffered a severe fracture of the leg. This accident immobilized him for several months and the match was called off until 1908.

On January 6, 1905, chess master Frank Marshall (1877-1944) married Caroline "Carrie" Krauss in New York. The next day, they sailed for Paris where Marshall was to play a chess match. At the time, the Marshall Chess Club had only one woman member. (source: Chess Life & Review, June 1971, p. 316)

"It was reported that Harry N. Pillsbury, the United States chess champion, attempted suicide at the Philadelphia Presbyterian Hospital, Thursday night, while temporarily deranged. Later, it was reported that it was merely a case of delirium consequent upon his feverish state following a delicate operation earlier in the week. While his mind was wandering, Pillsbury acted strangely, much after the manner of this class of patients, and wound up by making a bee line for one of the windows on the 4th floor. The presumption was that he contemplated hurling himself to destruction below, but the timely arrival of Mrs. Pillsbury served to quiet him, and he returned to his room to obtain much needed rest." (source: *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Apr 1, 1905)

In October 1905, a comic strip called "Rhymo the Monk" appeared in the *American Chess Bulletin* and the *New York Evening Journal*. Rhymo is bragging about his chess game and his opponent is getting irritated. Finally, the opponent shoves the chess board and pieces in Rhymo's face, saying "I never did like the old game anyway." (source: *Edward Winter Chess Notes* #7234)

In 1906, Pillsbury died and the US championship title reverted back to Showalter.

In December 1906, Nicolai Jasnogrodsky (1859-1914), a chess master, was arrested for swindling 10 citizens of Bay City, Michigan out of \$10,000 to marry a rich rabbi's daughter. He was an insurance agent and won the New York State Chess Championship in 1896. (source: *The New York Times*, Dec 3, 1906, p. 6)

In 1907, Mikhail Ivanovitch Chigorin (1850-1908) started having mental and physical problems. His health declined dramatically. He failed badly at a chess tournament. He was diagnosed with an advanced and untreatable case of diabetes (no insulin at the time). He was given a few months to live. Chigorin left Carlsbad and returned to his estranged wife and daughter in Lublin, Poland. While having an emotional outburst, he burned his chess pieces and chessboard. He started late in chess, playing in his first tournament at age 25. By age 29, he was the acknowledged champion of Russia. (source: *BCM*, 1908, pp. 97-99)

In June 1907, the New York State Chess Championship was played aboard the ship S.S. Alexandria, a steam paddle boat. It sailed between Charlotte, New York and Quebec. The winner was Julius Finn (1871-1931), who also won it in 1901 and 1908.

In August 1908, the opening ceremony for the 1908 World Chess Championship between Emanuel Lasker and Siegbert Tarrasch was held in Dusseldorf. At the ceremony, Tarrasch refused to talk to Lasker. Tarrasch, on catching sight of Lasker, literally clicked his heels and said: "Mr. Lasker, I have only three words to you: check and mate!"

In 1908, Ernest Shackleton (1874-1922) led the Nimrod Expedition in Antarctica. His men played chess during the expedition. *The Chess Amateur* magazine reported "Lieut. Shackleton, in his memorable Antarctic expedition, had on board, amongst other games and diversions, sets of chessmen, and no doubt many a tough fight took place in the solitudes of the Great Southern Unknown." (source: *American Chess Bulletin*, 1909, p. 255)

In 1909, the Correspondence Chess League of America (CCLA) was organized. It is the oldest postal chess organization in the United States, and the second oldest in the world. It was first called the Correspondence Chess League of Greater New York (CCLGNY). The players themselves had been playing correspondence chess since 1897. By 1917, the CCLGNY and three other groups merged to create the CCLA. It publishes the largest correspondence chess magazine in the world, *The Chess Correspondent*, the oldest national magazine in the U.S. The CCLA had the first numerical rating of players in 1940.

In 1909, Eliza Campbell Foot (1851-1914) of New York wrote a book on chess puzzles, becoming the first American woman chess author. In 1893, she defeated world champion William Steinitz, her cousin, in a correspondence game. She was killed by a hit-and-run driver on December 6, 1914. She was President of the Women's Chess Association in New York from 1894 to 1914.

On August 12, 1909, the German chess master Rudolf Swiderski (1878-1909) committed suicide. He had poisoned himself and then fired a bullet into his head in Leipzig. He had left a suicide note. He was recently convicted of perjury in a trial that involved him in a scandal. Some sources say that he committed suicide because he could not face an operation. He was a native of Leipzig. He was a violinist by profession. (source: *BCM*, 1909, p. 444) Marshall said, "Of all the chess masters I ever met, Swiderski was the most weird."

In late 1909, Frank Marshall travelled to Lexington, Kentucky and defeated Showalter after 14 days to become US champion.

In January-February 1910, Carl Schlechter (1874-1918) played a match against Dr. Emanuel Lasker for the World Chess Championship (in Vienna and [Berlin](#)). Schlechter was leading by one point going into the tenth and final game of the match. All he needed was a draw to become world champion. In the tenth game, after first achieving a won game, Schlechter blundered into a clearly drawn position, and then blundered again, which led to his loss of the game. The match ended tied at 5-5 (+1 -1 =8) and Lasker retained his title. Schlechter distinguished himself as the first player in 16 years to seriously challenge Lasker's world title. Schlechter was starving and died of congestion of the lungs. He was given the title of "The Drawing Master." (sources: *BCM*, 1910, pp. 98-99 and *BCM*, 1919, pp. 67-70 and *Chicago Tribune*, Feb 11, 1910, p. 14]

In 1910, Creassery Tatterall (1877-1957) wrote *A Thousand Endgames*. It was the first English-language book dedicated to chess endgames only.

In 1910, the Chess Club of Moscow only had 40 members. The Riga Chess Club had 60 members. (source: *BCM*, 1910, p.142)

In the early spring of 1911, 15 of the world's best chess masters were invited to the main casino in San Sebastian, Spain to compete in a round robin tournament. Each player was invited based on a previous result. Every player was supposed to have won 1st or 2nd place in a master tournament. Only Emanuel Lasker was missing. Ossip Bernstein objected about 22-year-old Jose Capablanca's inclusion since he did not fit the criteria of 1st or 2nd in a master tournament. He was still allowed to play thanks to Frank Marshall's support. Capablanca proved himself by beating Bernstein in the first round and winning the tournament. Rubinstein and Vidmar tied for 2nd. Marshall took 4th. In all, 105 games were played with 56 *53%) were drawn. (source: *BCM*, 1911, p. 158)

In 1911, biologist Charles Turnbull Harrison (1866-1914) was part of an Australasian Antarctic Expedition. He wrote in his diary that he played chess as much as possible while in Antarctica. He carved his own chess pieces out of wood. He couldn't find anything in Antarctica to use to make chess pieces. He described many of the men on the expedition playing chess during the idle hours. Chess was mentioned at least 53 times in his diary. (source: *Charles Turnbull Harrison Diary*, Dec 2, 1911 to Dec 31, 1912).

In September 1911, *Mated by Chess* was released in the USA. It was produced by the Societe des Etablissements L. Gaumont in France. Edwin and Marjorie are two lovers whose fathers, not being on friendly terms, will not consent to their engagement. The two fathers are pitted against each other in a chess match. Each places his child as a stake in the game. Each loses a game and using these results as an omen of good, the fathers consent to the children's engagement. (source: *Moving Picture World*, September 1911, p. 644)

On April 15, 1912, when the Titanic sank, dozens of chess letters, chess diagrams, and A. C. White's "Christmas Series" chess books were lost. The RMS Titanic had several chess boards and pieces aboard where passengers could play chess. Chess sets could be checked out to the second class passengers after filling out an application and giving it to the Saloon Steward. The Titanic had the capability of passengers playing chess with other passengers on other ocean liners as much as 1,000 miles away. Ocean liners had been using the wireless radio to play chess while sailing since the early 1900s. The ship that rescued the survivors, the RMS Carpathia, had been playing wireless chess since July 1905, when a game of chess was played by wireless between the Carpathia and the Baltic in the Atlantic Ocean. The game ended in a draw after 30 moves.

For a while, it was thought that U.S. chess champion Frank J. Marshall was on the *Titanic*. Mr. and Mrs. Marshall were on the passenger list of the *Titanic*. It turned out to be Henry Marshall and not Frank Marshall. Frank was still in Paris giving chess exhibitions. (source: *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 18, 1912 and April 20, 1912)

In 1912, Richard Griffith (1872-1955) was the original co-author with John Herbert White of *Modern Chess Openings* (usually called MCO). In 1912, Griffith won the British Chess

Championship. From 1920 to 1937, he was the editor of the *British Chess Magazine* (BCM). By profession, he was a metallurgist.

In 1913, Harold James Ruthven Murray published *A History of Chess*.

In 1913, Frank Marshall (1877-1944) won a chess tournament at Havana, edging out Capablanca by half a point. Marshall mistook a cheering mass of chess fans for a lynch mob. (source: Soltis, *Frank Marshall*, p. 3)

In September 1913, Jose Capablanca (1888-1942) obtained a post in the Cuban Foreign Office. He was expected to be an ambassador-at-large for Cuba. His official title was "Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary General from the Government of Cuba to the World at Large." He had no specific duties except to play chess around the world. In October 1913, he departed for St. Petersburg to take up his duties as chancellor of the Cuban embassy.

On October 16 1913, Dr. Julius Perlis (1880-1913), an Austrian chess master and lawyer, died in a mountain climb in the Alps. During a pleasure trip, he lost his way. His cries for help were heard by two tourists, but they failed to find his whereabouts. His frozen body was found the next day. He died of extreme exposure to low temperatures during a climb in the Austrian Inntaler Alps. He had only taken light clothing and fell asleep on a ledge. He froze to death. [source: *Hartford Courant*, Oct 19, 1913, p. 19]

From 1914 to 1921, no chess books were published in Russia. There was a lack of paper and paper was just too expensive.

In 1914, the Budapest Chess Club celebrated its 50th anniversary. Among the events was a game of living chess that was played on the stage of the Budapest opera house. The "pieces" were represented by 32 of the most beautiful ladies in Hungary, 16 blondes and 16 brunettes. (source: *BCM*, 1914, p. 221)

On Aug 2, 1914, the last round of Mannheim tournament, 19th German Chess Federation Ch was played. Alekhine led by 9.5 - 1.5, followed by Vidmar and Spielmann. After the declaration of war, eleven "Russian" players (Alekhine, Bogoljubov, Bogatyrchuk, Flamberg, Koppelman, Maljutin, Rabinovich, Romanovsky, Saburov, Selezniev, Weinstein) were interned in Rastatt, Germany. On September 14, 17, and 29, 1914, four of them (Alekhine, Bogatyrchuk, Saburov, and Koppelman) were freed and allowed to return home via Switzerland. Romanovsky was freed and went back to Petrograd in 1915, and a sixth one, Flamberg was allowed to return to Warsaw in 1916. During one search, the Germans discovered a photo of Alekhine in his luggage that showed him in uniform. The Germans assumed Alekhine was a Russian army officer. In reality, it was a uniform of the Imperial Law School that Alekhine attended.

After the outbreak of World War I, Czech champions Karel Hromadka (1887-1956) and Karel Treybal (1885-1941) left the Eastern front and traveled to Siberia, and then to the Pacific coast to avoid the war. They didn't return home until after 7 years.

In 1915, one of the first Hollywood silent films to depict a chess scene may have been *A Fool There Was*, was filmed. It was directed by Frank Powell and starred Theda Bara (1885-1955) as the Vamp, one of the first sex symbols of the early 20th century.

In 1915, Ajeeb, a chess automaton was set up at Coney Island by James Smith and Emma Haddera. One player lost to it and was so angry he took out a gun and shot at the torso of the automaton. It killed its hidden operator, Sam Gonotsky, which was covered up. In another incident with Ajeeb, a Westerner emptied his six-shooter into the automaton, hitting the operator in the shoulder (source: *The New York Times*, January 1929)

In 1916, Isidor Gunsberg (1854-1930) sued the *Evening News London* newspaper for libel when a newspaper columnist, Alfred William Foster, wrote that Gunsberg's chess column contained blunders. He won the suit after the British High Court accepted a submission that in chess matters, eight oversights did not make a blunder. Gunsberg won 250 British pounds for damages done to his reputation.

In 1916, the first place prize for the winner of the Siegbert Tarrasch-Jacques Mieses match, played in Berlin, was a half-pound of butter. Tarrasch won the match (and the butter) with 7 wins, 2 losses, and 4 draws. At the same time, the winner in a metropolitan event in Berlin was a keg of schmaltz herring.

In 1917, Alexander Alekhine was an investigator in Moscow for Centrrosysk, a government agency that located relatives who had disappeared during the Russian Revolution and Civil War.

In 1917, Aron Nimzowitsch was in the Baltic war zone during the Russian Revolution. He escaped being drafted into one of the armies by feigning madness, insisting that a fly was on his head. He then escaped to Berlin, and gave his first name as Arnold, possibly to avoid anti-Semitic persecution.

In 1918, Ossip Bernstein (1882-1962) was arrested and imprisoned by the Cheka (Bolshevik secret police) in Odessa, during the Russian Civil War. Bernstein's crime was his role as a legal advisor to bankers. There was no court trial. A minor official had a firing squad line up Bernstein and a number of other prisoners against a wall to be shot. A superior official appeared and asked to see the list of prisoners' names. Discovering Ossip Bernstein on the list, he asked Bernstein if he was the famous chess master. Not satisfied with Bernstein's affirmative reply, he made him play a game with him. If Bernstein lost or drew, he would be shot. Bernstein won in short order and was released. Soon, he escaped on a British ship and settled in France.

In 1918, the Serbian master Boris Kostić (1887-1963) won the Western Chess Association Championship, held in Chicago. He was 2 ½ points ahead of the 2nd place finishers. There was a 2nd place tie between Ed Lasker, Norman Whitaker, H. Hahlbohm, and J. Morrison (Canadian champion). (source: *BCM*, 1918, p. 367) During World War II, Kostić was

imprisoned in a concentration camp by a Nazi SS commander because he declined to participate in chess tournaments called "Free Europa" and to glorify the Nazi regime.

In 1918, the film *Summer Girls* was released. A poster for the movie show a couple playing chess with a tagline that says "What's the Answer, Chess or No!" (source: *Chess Amateur*, Oct 1919, p. 11)

In the fall of 1918, Emanuel Lasker (1868-1941) and Albert Einstein (1879-1955) first met at the home of Einstein's friend and first biographer, Alexander Moszkowski (1851-1934), also a chess player. Einstein wrote to his mother, "Recently I made the acquaintance of the chess master Lasker, a small, fine gentleman with a sharply cut profile and a Polish-Jew, yet genteel manner."

In 1919, chess master Ossip Bernstein (1882-1962), a Moscow financial lawyer, fled with his family to Odessa where he escaped on a British freighter and started a new life in Paris. He was arrested a year earlier by the Bolshevik secret police. He was given the grandmaster title by FIDE in 1950. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 6)

In June 1919, Alexander Alekhine was briefly imprisoned in Odessa's death cell by the Odessa Cheka, suspected of being a spy. He was charged with links with White counter-intelligence after the Russians liberated the Ukraine from German occupation. He was sentenced by a Revolutionary tribunal to be shot by a firing squad. Some sources say that Leon Trotsky himself spared Alekhine's life.

On December 2, 1919, Jose Capablanca was the first chess master to be invited to give a simultaneous exhibition at the British House of Commons. He played 33 members of the House of Congress and 5 members of the press, winning 36 and drawing 2. Spectators included Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Austen Chamberlain. (source: *BCM*, 1920, pp. 9-11)

On April 14, 1920, the first shortwave wireless radio match of note in the USA occurred between Edward Lasker in Chicago and Norman Whittaker in Washington, DC. The shortwave radio was provided by the U.S. Navy. Capablanca adjudicated the game. The moves by Whittaker were telephoned from the Capital City Chess Club to the naval operator at the Arlington, Virginia wireless station. Messages were received at an amateur's station in Evanston, Illinois, and relayed to the Illinois Chess Club.

Of the 18 players who competed in the All-Russian chess tournament of 1913-1914, only 6 remained in Russia after 1920. It was won by Alexander Alekhine, followed by Peter Romanovsky. Alekhine won a heavy vase for 1st place. The vase was confiscated from a pawn shop. The creation of the All-Union Chess Congress (Syvezhd) also occurred at the same time. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 9)

On November 10, 1920, 9-year-old Sammy Reshevsky (Samuel Rzehevski) gave his first simultaneous exhibition at the military academy at West Point. He played 20 officers and cadets, winning 19 and drawing one. Reshevsky was dressed in a sailor suit. There were

500 spectators at the event. On November 25, 1920, he played 20 opponents at the Lexington Theatre in Manhattan. He won 15, drew 4, and lost 2. (source: *BCM*, 1921, p. 25)

In 1921, International Master Dr. Edward Lasker (1885-1981) invented a mechanical breast pump, which saved many premature infants' lives. It made him a millionaire. He was president of the Marshall Chess Club and was elected Fellow of the New York Academy of Sciences. (source: *Chess Review*, Feb 1954, p. 37)

In June 1921, Sammy Reshevsky (Rzeschewski) (1911-1992) gave a 20-board simul at the Los Angeles Athletic Club and met several Hollywood stars such as Charlie Chaplin (1899-1977) and 5-year-old Jackie Coogan at the simul. Reshevsky later gave a 12-board simul at the Hamburger Department Store in Los Angeles, where he lost one game and burst out crying.

In 1921, the prize for the winner of the Moscow chess championship was a leather jacket. The prize for the 2nd place winner was a pair of American boots. The prize for 3rd place was a Red Army uniform.

In December 1921- January 1922, the first California State Championship was held at the Mechanics' Institute Chess Club in San Francisco. There were 11 players. The winner was E. W. Gruer (1890-1931) of Oakland. He won with a perfect 10-0 score. Stasch Mlotkowski took 2nd. (source: *BCM*, 1922, p. 103)

In 1922, Akiba Rubinstein won 4 brilliancy prizes in one tournament, held at Teplitz-Schonau. (source: *Chess Review*, Dec 1935, p. 285)

In 1922, New York University played a radio chess match with Princeton. It was the first intercollegiate radio chess match of its kind. (source: *New York Evening World*, Feb 11, 1922, p. 4)

In 1922 in Vienna, Alexander Alekhine (1892-1946) resigned in a game against Ernst Gruenfeld (1893-1962) by throwing the king across the room. (source: Reinfeld and Kmoch, *Chess Review*, Feb 1950, p. 55)

In October 1922, Moscow chess champion Nikolai Grigoriev (1895-1938) began writing a chess column in *Izvestia*. It was the first chess column to appear in a major Soviet publication. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 16)

In November 1922, Moscow chess players sent Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924) a chess clock, chess table, and a chess set. Lenin was about a 1900 rated chess player. The table and clock were preserved in the Lenin Museum near Red Square, for more than 50 years. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 18)

In the 1920s and 1930s, John Barrymore (1882-1942) was perhaps the strongest chess player in Hollywood, according to Fritz Feld (1900-1993). He played chess with Herman

Steiner (1905-1955). John's older brother, Lionel Barrymore (1878-1954), was also a chess player. (source: *Chess Life*, Mar 1988, p. 32)

On June 3, 1923, Sam Katz was playing a game against Louis Silverman at the Pitkin Chess Club in New York. Katz made a move which resulted in the loss of Silverman's queen. The shock of losing his queen caused Silverman to have a heart attack. He died at the chess board. Silverman was only 47. (source: *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 4, 1923)

In 1923, Sir George Alan Thomas (1881-1972) won the British chess championship. He also won it in 1934. He gave up competitive chess at the age of 69. He won the All-England badminton championship 21 times. In 1911, he reached the quarterfinals on the singles and the semifinals of the men's tennis doubles at Wimbledon. He won over 200 open events in tennis. He learned chess from his mother, who was lady champion at Hastings in 1895. He won the City of London Chess Club championship 5 times. (source: *BCM*, 1923, p. 362)

In the 1920s, Al Jolson (1886-1950), who appeared in the first ever 'talkie' *The Jazz Singer*, founded a chess club consisting of radio performers. He called his club the Knight Riders of the Air.

In 1923, Frank Marshall played Edward Lasker for the US championship and won. Marshall was US champion for 27 years and only defended his championship once. More people saw the challenge match between Marshall and Lasker in 1923 than any other US championship until 1984. (source: Soltis & McCormick, *The U.S. Chess Championship*, p. 28)

In July 1923, the second Soviet Championship was held in Petrograd. It was won by Peter Romanovsky (1892-1964), followed by Grigory Levenfish (1889-1961). Romanovsky won it again, jointly, in 1927. During the worst period of the Siege of Leningrad in winter of 1941-42, a rescue party reached his home. They found Romanovsky half-conscious from starvation and cold. The rest of his family had frozen to death. All the furniture in the house had been used for firewood. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 21)

On July 24, 1924, the World Chess Federation (FIDE) was founded in Paris. Representatives from 15 countries approved the organization. Alexander Rueb (1882-1959) of the Netherlands, was elected its first president. He held the post from 1924 to 1949. (source: Kazic, *International Championship Chess*, p. 1)

In 1924, the first Soviet Red Army Chess Championship has held. This was the beginning of a vast program of military events that pumped armed services money in chess. In 1963, the Central Army Chess Club opened in Moscow. Later members include Anatoly Karpov and Rafael Vaganian. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 27)

In 1924, the 3d Soviet Championship was held in Moscow. It was won by Efim Bogolyubov (1889-1952).

In 1924, Vladimir Lenin died and Petrograd was renamed Leningrad. In February 1924, a Central Chess Club was opened in the city, Leningrad had more than 200 chess circles, with 7,100 federated players.

In 1925, the first state-sponsored chess tournament was held in Moscow. The tournament was played in the Russian House of Commons. It was won by Efim Bogoljubow of Russia who later defected to Germany a year later.

In 1925, the 4th Soviet Championship was held in Leningrad. It was won by Efim Bogolyubov (1889-1952), followed by Levenfish.

In May 1925, the first mass youth chess tournament was held in Moscow. There were more than 1,000 participants. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 41)

In September, 1925, Mrs. June Sawyer was granted a divorce from her husband, Barritt Sawyer of Philadelphia, on the charge of cruel and barbarous treatment. Mrs. Sawyer alleged that her husband lost control and hit and beat her following chess games in which she defeated him in a game of chess. (source: *Delaware County Daily Times*, Sep 23, 1925)

In November-December 1925, the first Moscow International chess tournament was held. It was won by Bogoljubov, followed by Lasker, Capablanca, Marshall, and Torre.

On January 2, 1926, Benjamin R. Foster (1850-1926) committed suicide by shooting himself through the head. He was chess editor of the St. Louis Globe Democrat for 37 years. (source: The Sedalia Democrat, Jan 3, 1926)

In early 1926, Vera Menchik gave lectures on chess over the British Broadcasting system (BBC). (source: *British Chess Magazine*, Feb 1926, p. 53)

Vera Menchik was World's Women Champion from 1927 until her death on June 26, 1944. She has been the longest reigning Women's World Chess Champion (17 years). There was no world's women champion from 1944 until 1950 when Ludmilla Rudenko of the Soviet Union won the world's women championship in Moscow. A few days before she was killed, Vera was playing the championship of the Southern Counties Chess Union. It was an elimination tournament and she had won her first 3 games. She qualified for the semifinals and was supposed to play her next game on June 27, 1944. She died one day before her scheduled game.

In March 1926, the first mass-chess in Soviet Georgia was made in Tbilisi. More than 500 players showed up. Genrikh Kasparyan (1910-1995) won and later became the first Armenian master. Kasparyan is considered one of the greatest composers of chess endgame studies. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 48)

In December 1926, the Soviets renounced Efim Bogoljubow's (1889-1952) Soviet citizenship on the ground of his political allegiance. The Italian government had prevented his entrance into Italy to play in an international chess tournament in Meran. In the Soviet

Union, he was not allowed to play in any chess tournaments with permission from Nikolai Krylenko (1885-1938). (source: *BCM*, 1927, p. 24)

In 1927, Fedir Bohatyrchuk (1892-1984) and Romanovsky tied in the fifth Soviet Championship, held in Moscow. Bohatyrchuk was a medical doctor who later fled to Canada.

In July, 1928, the Brooklyn YMCA banned chess. All the chess tables and pieces were removed and the YMCA management forbade its members from playing chess even on a magnetic or pocket chess set. The secretary of the YMCA concluded that chess attracted too many undesirable elements to the YMCA and that too many chess players or spectators were smoking during a chess game. Smoking was forbidden inside the YMCA. The YMCA also did not want to fund the extra supervisory personnel it needed to keep a room open for chess. (source: *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 11, 1928)

In 1928, the 2nd Chess Olympic Chess Tournament was played in The Hague. It comprised of a 4-man team tournament, and open amateur tournament, and a women's tournament. Hungary (Havasi, Nagy, A. Steiner, and Vajda) took the gold medal, the USA took the silver, and Poland took the bronze. There were 17 countries represented. For individual medals, Isaac Kashdan took the gold medal, Andre Muffang of France took the silver, and Teodor Regedzinski took the bronze. Max Euwe won the Amateur World Championship, followed by Dawid Przepiorka and Hermanis Matisons. The tournament had to be played by the Olympic Games rules, so only "amateurs" were allowed to compete. (source: *BCM*, 1928, p. 329)

In 1929, M. Yaumi's *Chess* became the first book written in the Tatar language, with 3,000 copies published in Kazan. There followed the first-ever chess books in Armenian (1930), Uzbek *1934), Chuvash (1936), and Yakutsk (1939). By 1929, there were over 140,000 registered chess players in the USSR. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 49)

In 1929, the first edition of the FIDE rules of chess stated that a minimum of 30 moves had to be made before a draw could be agreed upon. The rule of minimum of 30 moves was abolished in 1952, when the second edition of the FIDE rules were published.

In April, 1930, chess was banned in Harbin, China as too dangerous and against the public welfare. Manchurian Chinese police raided cafes to stop anyone from playing chess. Players protested they were not gambling or playing for money. The Chinese police responded, No matter. Such games are dangerous. (source: *Edwardsville, Illinois Intelligencer*, Apr 24, 1930)

In 1931, the title of "Soviet Grandmaster" was abolished and not revived until Mikhail Botvinnik received it in 1935. Boris Verlinsky (1888-1950) was considered the first Soviet grandmaster in 1929. When he won the Soviet championship in 1929, he was given the title of grandmaster for life, as reported in 64 in September 1929. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 57)

In 1931, Mikhail Botvinnik won the 7th Soviet Championship, held in Moscow, followed by Riumin.

In 1931, Geza Maroczy (1870-1951), age 61, challenged Aron Nimzowitsch (1886-1935) to a pistol duel in Bled. Nimzowitsch flatly refused to participate. Maroczy was satisfied since, to him, a refusal to accept such a challenge, as a matter of honor, was worse than being shot. Maroczy was one of the original group of grandmasters given that title by FIDE, and the first GM to die.

In 1931, Soviet chess master Leonid Savitsky (1911-1935) was banned from chess for three months for “rude behavior.” He insulted a Chess Committee member. He competed in the USSR Championships of 1933 and 1934. Six months after the 1934-35 USSR championship, he died of heart failure.

In the 1930s, the Mexican government offered all foreign chess masters officer appointments as chess instructors in the Mexican Army. Kostich was made a Colonel. Reuben Fine and Isaac Kashdan were made Lieutenants. Alexander Alekhine and Jose Capablanca were also chess instructors in Mexico, but did not accept their rank. This status and honorary title facilitated their travels to chess tournaments throughout Mexico.

In 1932, six-time British champion Frederick Yates had just finished a 16 game simultaneous exhibition in London. He returned to his home very tired and went to sleep. He never woke up. There was a leakage in one of the fittings of a gas pipe in his house (the tap was never turned on – so no suicide) The gas leak killed him while he was asleep. In 1967, International Master Arpad Vajda also died as a result of a gas leak in his room.

In April, 1932, George Koltanowski (1903-2000) played 160 players simultaneously in Antwerp, winning 135, losing 7, and drawing 18, a world record at the time. (source: *Piqua Daily Call*, April 20, 1932)

In 1932, Herman Steiner (1905-1955) moved from New York to Los Angeles. He became chess editor of the *Los Angeles Times* and founded the Hollywood Chess Group, which had many movie stars as members. In May 1946, Steiner played Arnold Denker for the U.S. Chess Championship in Los Angeles, but lost. He was defending his State Championship in Los Angeles in 1955, when after finishing his fifth-round game, he felt unwell and his afternoon game was postponed. About 2 hours later around 9:30 pm, Steiner died practically instantaneously of a heart attack while being attended by a physician. By agreement of the players, the 1955 California State Championship tournament was canceled. (source: *Chess Life*, May 2021, p. 31)

In 1932, the Leningrad Chess Championship was the first event that the participants were given time off from their work to play chess. The event was won by Mikhail Botvinnik (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 55)

In late 1932, Fred Reinfeld (1910-1964) began writing about chess. He wrote over 100 chess books during his life.

In June 1933, a German National Master chess tournament was held in Aachen, Germany. The event was won by Efim Bogoljubow. Dr. Joseph Goebbels (1897-1945), Nazi propaganda minister, was the honorary chair. Jews were excluded from German chess tournaments, chess cafes, and chess clubs. Goebbels wrote in his diary, "The chess game for power begins."

In 1933, Botvinnik won the 8th Soviet Championship, held in Leningrad, followed by Vladimir Alatortsev.

In 1933, Salo Flohr (1908-1983) became the chess champion of Czechoslovakia. He won it again in 1936. Flohr became so famous in Czechoslovakia that his image appeared in advertisements for shoe, cigarette, and cologne brands.

In 1934, Svetozar Gligoric (1923-2012) learned chess in Belgrade, taught by a boarder taken in by his mother. He had first seen chess being played in a neighborhood bar. Gligoric did not have a chess set at home, so he made himself a chess set by carving chess pieces from corks from wine bottles. Gligoric became a chess master at the age of 16.

In 1935, the second Moscow International saw a tie between Mikhail Botvinnik and Salo Flohr. They were followed by Lasker, Capablanca, and Spielmann.

On August 20, 1935, Agnes Lawson-Stevenson was killed by a propeller of an airplane. She was four-time British Ladies' Champion and was married to Rufus Stevenson, the editor of the *British Chess Magazine*. She was on her way to the Women's World Championship from Berlin to Warsaw by plane. The aircraft stopped in Poznan, Poland and she left the aircraft to have her passport checked. She returned to the aircraft from the front of the plane and ran into the moving propeller.

In 1935, 700,000 players participated in the Soviet trade union championship. This was the largest chess tournament ever. Half the world's chessplayers were citizens of the USSR. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 82)

In November 1935, the match between Alekhine and Euwe was to move from Amsterdam to Ermelo, 45 miles away, for the 21st game. A car was supposed to pick up Alekhine and drive him there. But the car did not arrive, so Alekhine took a train. By the time Alekhine arrived, he was drunk. Alekhine wanted to delay the game for the next day. But the tournament director, Hans Kmoch, said there were 2,000 people waiting to see the match. Alekhine refused medical attention and decided to play. He lost in 40 moves. It was Euwe's first win as Black,

In January 1936, the finals of the All-Russian Trade Union Tournament finished after six months of play in Moscow. The event had 700,000 participants. Georgy Lisitsin (1909-1972) and Vitaly Chekhover (1908-1965) tied for 1st place.

In May 1936, Samuel Reshvesky (1911-1992) became US chess champion. Frank Marshall declined to play in the invitational tournament. 48 players were in the event. 2nd place went to Simonson. 3rd-4th place went to Fine and Treysman.

In 1936, Arnold Denker (1914-2005) and Al Horowitz (1907-1973) shared a room at the Lincoln Hotel managed by a fellow member of the Manhattan Chess Club (Chief Hall). They stayed without paying rent. During the day, Denker and Horowitz would hustle chess games for quarters. Whoever won the most during the day had to pay dinner.

In 1936, Jose Capablanca agreed to play in the Third Moscow International after being promised a \$500 honorarium, \$200 in travel expenses, and the use of a fur coat. In 1935, while Capablanca was in Moscow, he given the use of an American car, a Lincoln, for sightseeing. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 96)

In 1936, the Third Moscow International was won by Capablanca, followed by Botvinnik, Flohr, and Lilienthal.

In 1937, the Tenth Soviet Championship, held in Tbilisi was won by Levenfish.

In 1937, Manhattan Chess Club member Louis Zeckendorf (1838-1937) died at the age of 99. He was less than a month short of reaching 100. During the Civil War, he played chess with Confederate General James Longstreet (1821-1904). (source: *Chess Review*, April 1937, p. 85)

In the 1930s, John Barrymore (1882-1942) was perhaps the strongest chess player in Hollywood, according to Fritz Feld (1900-1993). He played chess with Herman Steiner (1905-1955). John's older brother, Lionel Barrymore (1878-1954), was also a chess player. (source: *Chess Life*, Mar 1988, p. 32)

In 1938, Reshevsky defended his title and won the US championship. He was followed by Fine and Simonson.

In 1938, Rowena Bruce of England played world champion Alexander Alekhine at Plymouth. It was the first time a woman played a current world chess champion.

In 1938, Botvinnik's father-in law was arrested while Botvinnik was in the Netherlands at the AVRO chess tournament. In 1940, Botvinnik was admitted to the Communist Party, a rare privilege. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 108)

In 1939, the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League Chess Club was formed, mostly made up of Jewish players. It defeated Herman Steiner's Hollywood Chess Institute in match play, but lost to the stronger Los Angeles Chess and Checker Club.

In 1939, the United States Chess Federation formed through the merger of the American Chess Federation and the National Chess Federation. At the time, the combined membership was around 1,000. (source: *Chess Life*, May 2023, p. 38)

In 1939, the 11th Soviet Championship, held in Leningrad, was won by Botvinnik, followed by Kotov.

In 1939, chess master Weaver Adams (1901-1963) wrote a book *White to Play and Win*. After publication, he played in a tournament in Dallas. He lost all his games as White and won all his games as Black. In 1948, he won the 49th US Open, held in Baltimore. He played in the US Championship 5 times. He won the Massachusetts State Championship 5 times. He won the Marshall Chess Club championship 6 times. He won the New York State championship 4 times.

In 1939, the Chess Olympiad was held in Buenos Aires. The American players that was chosen to play in the Olympiad demanded \$2,500 from the USCF to participate. The USCF offered only \$1,500 for each player. The players refused so there was no USA team at the Chess Olympiad.

Right after the start of World War II, FIDE headquarters were transferred to Argentina. On September 13, 1939, Augusto de Muro (?-1959), president of the Argentine Chess Federation, was elected president of FIDE. (source: *Chess Review*, Oct 1939, p. 198 and *Chess Review*, Nov 1940, p. 174)

On September 23, 1940, a German air raid destroyed the National Chess Centre, the largest chess club in London. It had over 700 members. The contents of chess club were entirely destroyed. The manager of the club was world woman champion Vera Menchik, who later died in another air raid. The National Chess Centre was re-opened in 1952, just opposite of the original building, and was active throughout the 1950s. The National Chess Centre no longer exists.

In 1940, Reshevsky won the 3rd US championship. He was followed by Fine and Kashdan.

In 1940, the 12th Soviet Championship, held in Moscow, saw a tie between Igor Bondarevsky (1913-1979) and Andor Lilienthal (1911-2010).

On January 11, 1941, Emanuel Lasker died from a kidney infection while a charity patient in New York's Mount Sinai Hospital.

In April 1941, the Absolute Soviet Championship, held in Leningrad and Moscow, was won by Botvinnik, followed by Keres and Smyslov.

In July 1941, only 15 players entered the 42nd U.S. Open in St. Louis, the lowest ever. The event was won by Reuben Fine.

In 1941, the first USCF open correspondence chess tournament was won by the American violinist, Louis Persinger (1887-1966) of New York City. In 1944 he played in the US Chess Championship, but only scored ½ point out of 17 games and took last place. When he was a

judge at violin contests, he would usually pull out his pocket chess set and study chess or find some other judge, such as David Oistrakh, to play chess.

In 1941, Reshevsky beat I.A. Horowitz in a US championship match. It was the first championship since 1923.

In 1941, Russian master Alexander Ilyan-Genevsky (1894-1941) supposedly died from a Nazi bomb that hit his ship on Lake Ladoga as he tried to flee Leningrad. However, another source says he was arrested by the secret police during the purges and died in prison in 1941. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 2)

In 1942, the Brooklyn Daily Eagle reported on Humphrey Bogart's chess. "Humphrey Bogart and Paul Henreid started a chess game months ago, when production first started on "Capablanca." They have continued making a move by note or telephone or catching up, face to face, for a few minutes on the set of new pictures in which they are working." — *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Dec 6, 1942

In 1942, Reshevsky defeated Isaac Kashdan in a playoff match 6 months after the US championship tournament, when they both tied for 1st. The USCF had cancelled the 1942 US championship, but they later relented. The playoff match was held at several US Army camps for the benefit of the troops.

In the fall of 1942, Tigran Petrosian (1929-1984) was able to draw with Salo Flohr in a simul. That year he made friends with David Bronstein and used his breakfast money to buy chess books. [source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess: 1917-1991*, p. 207]

In 1943, Botvinnik won the Moscow chess championship, followed by Smyslov.

In 1943, Eugene Znosko-Borovsky (1884-1954), a Russian chess player who lived in Paris, was giving chess exhibitions in Paris for the benefit of war prisoners. (source: *Chess Review*, Feb 1943, p. 46)

Arnold Denker (1914-2005) was U.S. chess champion in 1944 and 1946. During World War II, he was invited by the US government to help crack enemy codes because of his chess prowess. (source: *ChessBase News*, Jan 5, 2005)

In 1943, Arthur Bisguier (1929-2017) won the New York High School Championship while still in junior high school.

In 1944, the 13th Soviet Championship, held in Moscow, was won by Botvinnik, followed by Smyslov and Boleslavsky.

In 1944, Arnold Denker won the 5th US championship. He was followed by Fine, Horowitz, and Steiner.

In 1944, chessplayer and military engineer Alexander Kotov (1913-1981) was awarded the Order of Lenin at a Kremlin ceremony for inventing an efficient 120-PM-43 mortar. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 144)

Frank Marshall (1877-1944), late in life, became addicted to bingo and bridge. He died on November 4, 1944, after returning home from a night of bingo in Jersey City.. Over 300 people attended his funeral at the Greenwich Presbyterian Church on November 13. He was the first American to defeat a Soviet player in an international tournament (New York 1924).

From December 12, 1944 to January 31, 1945, Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) organized an "Imagery of Chess" exhibition at the Marshall Chess Club and the Julien Levy Gallery . He invited artists to redesign the standard chess sets or create works that explored the symbolism of chess. Duchamp designed the catalog and was the arbiter in a blindfold match given by George Koltanowski on 7 boards, played on January 6, 1945. The seven players were: Julien Levy, Frederick Kiesler, Alfred Barr, Vittorio Rieti, Xanti Schawinsky, Dorothea Tanning, and Max Ernst. Marcel Duchamp was his teller who called out the moves. Koltanowski won 6 and drew one (to Kiesler). (source: *The New Yorker*, Jan 6, 1945)

In 1945, Alexander Kotov (1913-1981) was awarded the Order of Lenin for an important invention relating to mortars. His father was an armory worker. Kotov won the championship of Tula at age 16. In 1939, he took 2nd in the USSR championship, behind Botvinnik. He was awarded the Soviet Grandmaster title, the third to do so after Botvinnik and Levenfish. (source: Chess Review, Feb 1945, P. 9)

In 1945, Alan Turing (1912-1954) used chess-playing as an example of what a computer could do. Turing himself was a weak chess player.

In September 1945, the US vs. USSR radio chess match was played. Each team had 10 players. USSR won 15.5 to 4.5. There were transmission errors in almost every game. This added more than 6 hours to the length of a 40-move game. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 157)

In 1945, the Kiev Chess Club in Ukraine was blown up by Germans. (source: *Chess Review*, Dec 1945, p. 26)

In 1946, a chess book published in 1474 was sold at auction in London for \$7,600 (\$116,000 in 2022 currency). The book is *The Game and Playe of Chess* by Jacobus de Cessolis, translated by William Caxton. (source: *Chess Review*, May 1946, p. 5)

In May 1946, Denker defeated Herman Steiner in a match for the US championship.

In 1946, the Washington Chess Federation (WCF) was formed. (source: *Chess Life*, April 2022, p. 6)

In late May 1946, Reshevsky won the 6th US championship. He was followed by Kashdan, Santasiere, and Levin.

On Feb 4, 1947, I. A. Horowitz (1907-1973) was traveling the country giving simultaneous exhibitions. While traveling by train near Fresno, California, his train, the Southern Pacific San Joaquin Daylight Express, wrecked. He was uninjured but many passengers were killed and over 100 were injured. Horowitz was in the 13th car. (source: *Chess Review*, Mar 1947, p.6)

In 1947, the 15th Soviet Championship was held in Leningrad and won by Paul Keres, followed by Boleslavsky, Bondarevsky, and Smyslov.

The worst score in the U.S. Amateur championship has to be Walter Stephens (1883-1948), who went 0 out of 11 games in the 1945 U.S. Amateur championship. Stephens was best known as the tournament director of the 1942 U.S. Chess Championship when he mistakenly forfeited Arnold Denker after Samuel Reshevsky's flag had fallen. He had flipped the chess clock around because he was positioned behind the clock and was not looking at the clock or flag at the time.

In 1948, Judith Edith Price (1872-1956) won the British ladies chess championship. She was 76, the oldest person ever to win a national championship. She won the British Women's Championship five times (1922, 1923, 1924, 1928, and 1948).

In May 1948, Mikhail Botvinnik won the World Championship tournament played at The Hague and Moscow. Smyslov took 2nd.

In August 1948, David Bronstein won the First Interzonal, held in Saltsjobaden, near Stockholm, Sweden. He was followed by Szabo, Boleslavsky, and Kotov.

In 1948, Herman Steiner won the 7th US championship. He was followed by Kashdan, Kramer, and Ulvestad.

In 1949, when Zsa Zsa Gabor (1917-2016) married the actor George Sanders (1906-1972), her third husband, they played chess "incessantly" on their honeymoon. George wrote in his autobiography that the two played chess nearly every night on their honeymoon.

In 1950, Hans Johner (1889-1975) won the Swiss championship for the 12th time since 1908. His older brother, Paul (1887-1938), had won the Swiss championship 6 times. Hans was a director of the Zurich Philharmonic Orchestra. He was an accomplished musician, playing the viola and violin. He edited a chess column in the *Neue Zurcher Zeitung* for 57 years.

In 1950, Isaac Asimov (1920-1992) published his first novel, *Pebble in the Sky*. It included a real chess game, Verlinsky – Levenfish, Moscow 1924, round 15 of the Soviet chess

championship. Asimov changed that last few moves so that the game ended in checkmate. This is the only game from a Soviet chess championship that was featured in a fiction book.

In 1950, the First Candidates Tournament, held in Budapest, saw a tie between Boleslavsky and Bronstein. Bronstein later won the play-off.

In 1950, FIDE created the International Grandmaster title. 11 of the 27 members of the first GM class were Soviets. Most of the non-Soviets were retired. At least 12 of the top 15 world's strongest chess players were Soviets. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 105)

In December 1950, Paul Keres won the 18th Soviet Championship, held in Moscow.

In 1951, Boris Ivkov (1933-2022) of Yugoslavia won the first World Junior Championship, held in Birmingham, England. He later married a former "Miss Argentina." He once lost a game as Black to Spyridon Skembris, who played the Grob (1.g4) against him.

In 1951, there were a million registered chess players in the USSR. The number would soon reach 3 million. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 246)

On May 11, 1951, Botvinnik tied with Bronstein and remained world champion.

In 1951, 19-year-old Larry Evans won the 8th US championship. He was followed by Reshevsky. It was the first time Reshevsky lost a chess game in a US championship tournament in 15 years, or more than 70 games. (source: Soltis & McCormick, *The U.S. Chess Championship*, p. 128)

In December 1951, Paul Keres won the 19th Soviet Championship, held in Moscow. He was followed by Geller, Petrosian, Smyslov, and Botvinnik.

In 1952, the U.S. Department of State prepared a film for Central European distribution on cultural aspects of life in Greenwich Village. They chose the Marshall Chess Club as one of the Village's chief centers of intellectual activity. (source: *Chess Review*, Oct 1952, p. 294)

In 1952, the Soviets finally sent a team to a FIDE chess Olympiad, held in Helsinki. Soviet athletes were also taking part in their first summer Olympic Games.

In 1952, Larry Evans won a match victory over Herman Steiner to remain US champion. Evans scored 10-4.

In 1953, the USCF awarded the 1954 U.S. Open to Hollywood, California. A month later, the USCF Tournament Committee rescinded that award. The reason for the change was a fundamental disagreement between the Committee and the Hollywood sponsors. The Hollywood plan was to have the Open in a number of sections. The sponsors were to raise a large prize fund so as to guarantee cash prizes and extra money for the Master Section to attract master chess players. Prizes for the other sections were to be trophies only. The

plan was rejected by the USCF, and they awarded the site to New Orleans (won by Larry Evans). The U. S. Open in New Orleans banned black chess players from participating.

In 1953, the 2nd Candidates Tournament was held in Neuhausen-Zurich. It was won by Vasily Smyslov. Tied for 2nd were Bronstein, Keres, and Reshevsky, followed by Petrosian, Geller, and Najdorf.

In 1954, the U.S. Open was held in New Orleans. It banned African-Americans from entering the open tournament. At the time, Louisiana segregated Black and White chess players, even in chess clubs.

In 1954, the Argentine Chess Federation called off its national chess championship after one of its invited chess players punched an arbiter. (source: *Chess Review*, December 1954, p. 358)

In September 1954, William Lombardy won the 76th New York State Chess Championship at Binghamton, NY, with a score of 7-2. At age 16, he equaled the feats of George Kramer (in 1945) and Larry Evans (in 1948), who also won the New York state title at age 16. He appeared on the front cover of the October 1954 issue of *Chess Review*, titled "Sweet Sixteen." There were 32 players in the event. (source: *Chess Review*, Oct 1954, p. 292)

In June 1954, the USSR vs. USA match was played in New York. USSR scored 20, and the USA team scored 12.

In 1954, Arthur Bisguier won the 9th US championship tournament. He was followed by Evans and Seidman.

In 1955, Fridrik Olafsson (born in 1935) of Iceland arrived late to participate in the annual Christmas Hastings tournament in England. No rooms could be found for him, so he spent his first night in a jail cell at the Hastings police station as a guest to the local police. Olafsson went on to tie for 1st place with Viktor Korchnoi in this event. Olafsson became Iceland's first chess grandmaster in 1958.

In 1955, the first international chess tournament was held in Africa at Johannesburg. It was won by Wolfgang Heidenfeld (1911-1981) of South Africa. He was South African champion in 1939, 1945-46, 1947, 1949, 1951, 1955, 1957, and 1959. He moved to Ireland and was Irish champion in 1958, 1963, 1964, 1968, and 1972.

In 1955, the monthly chess magazine *Shakhmatny Bulletin* first appeared. It was edited by Ragozin until 1962, and then by Averbakh. It had a circulation of 28,000. Publication ended in 1990. Bobby Fischer called it the best chess magazine in the world. It published about 2,500 complete games per year. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 230)

In 1955, the 22nd Soviet Championship was held in Moscow. Geller and Smyslov tied for 1st.

In 1955, there were 104 chess masters in the USSR. By 1964, there were 269 masters. By 1966, there were over 400 masters. In 1966, 44 players became new chess masters. In 1955, there were 16 Soviet grandmasters. In 1959, there were 19 Soviet GMs. In 1964, there were 24 Soviet GMs. In 1969, there were 32 Soviet GMs. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 280)

In 1956, Isaac Kashdan (1905-1985) appeared on Groucho Marx's *You Bet Your Life*. The episode aired February 9, 1956. Groucho called him "Mr. Ash Kan" throughout the show. Kashdan's partner was Helen Schwartz, the mother of Tony Curtis. Kashdan told Groucho that it was pretty hard to cheat in chess. Groucho responded, "If I can't cheat, forget it. The only fun I have in any game is cheating." They failed to win any money and did not say the secret word.

In 1956, China held its first Chess Exhibition Tournament, held in Beijing. Only six players from four provinces participated. In 1957, China held its first national chess championship. It was won by Zhang Fujiang. In 1962, the Chess Association of China was formed. In 1984, a plan called the "big Dragon Project" was started to promote chess in China and raise its level of chess to an international standard.

On May 20, 1956, Bobby Fischer first appeared in the USCF rating list with an initial rating of 1726. By March 1958, his rating was 2626. (source: *Chess Life*, July 2021, p. 34.)

In 1956, The Soviets hosted the 1956 chess Olympiad, held at Moscow's Central House of the Soviet Army. 34 national teams competed, but no American team. The Soviets took the gold by 4 ½ points, (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 231)

In 1956, the first chess program appeared on Soviet television. It was a report on the 24th Soviet Chess Championship that was broadcast from a Leningrad studio. In 1958, there was a special broadcast from Riga on the 25th Soviet Championship. There were TV broadcasts from the Botvinnik-Tal matches, with commentary by Averbakh and Kotov. There were broadcasts on the Botvinnik-Petrosian match, with commentary by Kotov. In 1967, David Bronstein organized a monthly TV show called "Four Knights' Club." It covered chess history. There was also a weekly 30-minute program called "Chess School. It ran until 1988. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 367)

In 1957, Pal Benko (1928-2019) was granted asylum, but had to wait on a preferential visa (which he obtained on Oct 11, 1957). While waiting for a visa, Benko played in two more chess tournaments in Iceland. In the first, he took 1st place, ahead of Olafsson and Pilnik. In the second, he took 2nd, behind Olafsson. (source: "Our New Member," *Chess Review*, Dec 1957, p. 355)

In September 1957, the first women's chess Olympiad was held in Emmen, Holland. 21 countries and 43 women players participated. The oldest lady participant was 82 years old. All the players were lodged in private apartments, and not in hotels. The USSR team took 1st place.

In 1957, the 24th Soviet Championship, held in Moscow, was won by Mikhail Tal. Bronstein and Keres tied for 2nd. Spassky and Tolush tied for 4th.

On April 27, 1957, Vasily Smyslov (1921-2010) defeated Botvinnik for the world chess championship, which was held in Moscow. He won the Candidates Tournament a year before.

In 1957, Reshevsky defeated Bisguier in a match, but the US championship title was not at stake.

In 1957/58, Bobby Fischer won the 10th US chess championship at the age of 14, the youngest champion ever. He was followed by Reshevsky, Sherwin, Lombardy, and Berliner.

In 1958, The Gambit Chess Club in London finally closed. It began as a coffee house in 1898. From 1898 to 1958, it was only closed for two days during September 1940, when it was bombed during a Nazi air raid. During its existence, it only had one burglary. A man once died at the club while playing chess. The club was owned and run by Edith Price, who, for many years, did not allow women to enter the club, although she did hire waitresses for the club.

In 1958, Svetozar Gligoric (1923-2012) was declared the best athlete of Yugoslavia.

In 1958, Tal won the 25th Soviet Championship, held in Riga. He was followed by Petrosian and Bronstein.

On May 8, 1958, Botvinnik defeated Smyslov in Moscow, becoming world chess champion again.

In 1958, Valentin Ivanov was winning the Washington D.C. National Press Club's chess championship before throwing his final three games. He did that to avoid calling undue attention to himself. At the time, he was an undercover KGB spy. The winner was Albert Fox. (source: *Chess Life*, Feb 2021, p. 16)

Robin Ault (1941-1994) was the first person to win the U.S. Junior Championship three times (1959-1961). In the 1959, the USCF had a rule that the American Junior Chess Champion was automatically qualified into the adult title competition. So Robin was invited to the 1959-60 U.S. Championship, and then lost all 11 games (0-11). After this, the USCF no longer allowed the top junior player to be invited to the U.S. Championship.

In 1959, the Soviets first began an annual junior chess championship, 13 years after the US began theirs. It was won by Alexander Tomson (1940-). (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 1)

In 1959, Bobby Fischer was so popular in Yugoslavia that a chess club was named after him. (source: *Chess Review*, June 1959, p. 165)

In 1959, the 1959 Candidates' Tournament was held in Bled/Zagreb/Belgrade. Bobby Fischer was the only one that did not wear a suit and tie, preferring his ski sweater and wrinkled pants. The Yugoslavs described Fischer like a hero of an old cowboy movie. Fischer lost his travelers checks and was short on money during the entire tournament.

On May 7, 1960, Mikhail Tal (1936-1992) defeated Botvinnik in Moscow to become World Chess Champion.

In 1960, Lisa Lane (born 1938), U.S. women's chess champion, was featured in *Look* magazine (November 22, 1960 issue). In 1961, she appeared on "What's My Line" (Season 12, Episode 38, May 21, 1961). She stumped the panel in "What's My Line," trying to guess her occupation as a professional chess player. She appeared on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* on the August 7, 1961 issue of *Sports Illustrated*. The article was entitled "Queen of Knights" and Pawns. She was also featured in the April 23, 1962 issue of *Sports Illustrated*, in an article called "Queen's Move."

In 1960, West Point military academy became the first college to allow chess as a varsity sport.

In 1960-1961, a chess game played by shortwave radio took place in Antarctica. The game was played between American Lt. Cdr John McNearney at McMurdo Sound and an unknown Russian at Mirny base, 1,600 miles away. The game was set up with the aid of a Soviet glaciologist who wintered at the American base. (source: Chess Life, Jan 1961, p. 29)

On May 12, 1961, Botvinnik defeated Tal in the world championship, held in Moscow, regaining his title.

In 1962, Japan held its first international chess tournament in Yokohama. It was won by Nobuhiko Sakaguchi, who had been Japan's best chess player since 1947. He was also a Shogi chess master. Japan did not have an organized chess federation until 1968. In 1968, millionaire Yasuji Matsumoto (1935-2003) formed and funded the Japan Chess Association (JCA), which joined the World Chess Federation (FIDE) that year. Japan's first national chess tournament took place in 1969.

In 1962, Cyprus scored the worst score of any chess Olympiad when it scored 0 out of 20 in the 15th Chess Olympiad in Varna, Bulgaria. One of its players, Milton Ionnidis on board 3, scored the worst of any score in the chess Olympiad when he lost all 20 games he played. Cyprus only won 2 games, drew 2 games, and lost 76 games. In 1964 at the Tel Aviv chess Olympiad, Ionnidis lost all his games (4) and Cyprus, again, took last place, drawing 1 and losing 13. Cyprus won 5 games, drew 4 games, and lost 47 games.

In 1962, General David M. Shoup (1904-1983), Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, was the head of the Honorary Committee of Flag Officers for the third Thomas Emery Armed Forces tournament. In 1962, the cash awards were eliminated. The Thomas Emery grant and the American Chess Foundation provided payment for per diem expenses of the

participants, silver cups for 1st through 3rd place, and plaques to all others. (source: *Chess Review*, Sep 1962, p. 259)

In 1962, the Central Palace of Moscow was built on Lenin Hills. It is considered the most beautiful chess club in the world. It offered chess with 161 other activities. The Leningrad House of Pioneers had a large chess section. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 116)

On June 6, 1962, Tigran Petrosian (1929-1984) won the 5th Candidates Tournament, held in Curacao. Paul Keres and Efim Geller tied for 2nd. The 1962 Candidates Tournament, held in Curacao, was paid in part by a public lottery and the sale of postal first-day covers.

In 1963, Lt. Col. Ed Edmondson (1920-1982) was elected president of the USCF and served until 1966. He was USCF's first executive director and served from 1966 to 1975. On October 21, 1982, Ed Edmondson (1920-1982) died after suffering a heart attack on September 27 while playing chess on Waikiki Beach. (source: *Chess Life*, Jan 1983, p. 10)

On February 11, 1963, Tigran Petrosian (1929-1984) won the 28th Soviet Championship, held in Moscow, Korchnoi took 2nd, followed by Geller and Stein.

On May 20, 1963, Petrosian defeated Botvinnik in Moscow to become world chess champion.

In 1963, the celebrated Botvinnik School opened. It closed a year later. It was not on firm footing until 1976. Karpov, Kasparov, and Kramnik all attended the Botvinnik School. Petrosian opened up his own school in 1977. Smyslov opened his own school in 1978. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 1)

In 1964, General David Shoup (1904-1983) accepted the role of Honorary President of the American Chess Foundation. He had been the Commandant of the Marine Corps, where he served more than 37 years of active duty. He was awarded the Medal of Honor in World War II. He was an avid chess player and did much to support and promote Armed Forces chess. (source: *Chess Life*, Feb 1964, p. 46)

In 1964, Tal had a mistress who was an actress. Tal was still married to Sally Landau. In early 1964, Tal was summoned to the Central Committee and was told that he had to choose between his wife and his mistress. Tal told the committee that this was none of their business, and that he would do what he pleased. The authorities threatened him that they would not allow him to play in the Amsterdam Interzonal. Sally told the Committee that she was divorcing Mikhail. The authorities then allowed Tal to play in the Interzonal. After the Interzonal, Sally withdrew her divorce papers. (source: Havanur, "Sally and Misha: Parting of ways," *ChessBase Chess News*, Dec 21, 2019).

In 1965, Moscow State University offered the first course on chess from a university. Over 2,000 students signed up for the course.

In 1965, Yugoslav player Bojan Kurajica (born in 1947) won the World Junior Championship, held in Barcelona. The title is an automatic award to the International Master title. At the time Bojan was not even a master, and is the only person to be awarded the IM title without first being a master. He was awarded the grandmaster title in 1974.

In 1965, Rohn Roycoft (1929-) founded EG, the first long-running journal exclusively for endgame studies. In 1972, he published *Test Tube Chess*. (source: *British Chess Magazine*, Nov 2015, p. 565)

In 1965, Viktor Korchnoi won the 32nd Soviet Championship by two full points, the biggest margin since Botvinnik in 1945. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 266)

In 1965, FIDE ended its Candidates Tournaments and switched to a series of knockout matches. The Soviets dominated the five Candidates Tournaments.

In March 1966, when Bent Larsen (1935-2010) of Denmark defeated Efim Geller (1925-1998) in a chess match (the Candidates playoff), it was the first time in a match that a Soviet GM had ever lost to a foreigner. The playoff match was held in Copenhagen. The two players split 8 games with two wins each. Larsen then won the first tiebreak game. Larsen took 3rd place in the Candidates tournament, after Spassky and Tal.

In April 1966, Walter Browne (1949-2015) tied for 1st place in the Marshall Chess Club Championship, but lost the play-off to Paul Robey. At age 17, Browne was the youngest player in the event. Robey was the oldest player in the event at age 55. Browne and Robey were supposed to play a two-game playoff match. Browne lost the first game and failed to appear for the second game, losing on forfeit. (source: *The New York Times*, April 11, 1966 and *The New York Times*, May 2, 1966)

In 1966, Bobby Fischer (born in 1943) lost to Florin Gheorghiu (born in 1944) at the 1966 chess Olympiad in Havana. It was the only time Fischer lost to someone younger than him during his entire chess career.

On June 9, 1966, Petrosian defeated Spassky in Moscow for the world championship.

In the 1966 U.S. Open in Seattle, the next-to-last round was interrupted by thunderous noise. More than 14,000 Beatles fans had packed into the Seattle Center Coliseum next door to the tournament site, where the Beatles were about to perform. Many fans knocked on the windows of the tournament site, thinking the Beatles were inside. The tournament director ordered the chess clocks be stopped for 20 minutes until it quieted down. (source: *Chess Life*, Nov 2020, p. 11)

In 1967, Bent Larsen won the first Chess Oscar for the best chess player of the year. The Chess Oscar used to be a woman under an umbrella. It is now a man in a boat. The bronze statuette is titled Fascinated Wanderer. There were no chess Oscars from 1989 to 1994.

In 1968 International Master David Levy (1945-) made a \$3,000 bet that no chess computer would beat him in 10 years. He won his bet. The original bet was with John McCarthy, a distinguished researcher in Artificial Intelligence at Stanford. The bet was made at the 1968 Machine Intelligence Workshop in Edinburgh University.

In 1968, Lubomir Kavalek (1943-2021) of Czechoslovakia defected to the West. He did it by bribing guards at the border with cases of vodka, which he bought from his winnings at a chess tournament. He came to America and got a job with Radio Free Europe because he was fluent in English, Russian, Czech, and Serbian. In 1972, Bobby Fischer got rid of Bill Lombardy and made Kavalek his second during the world championship match with Spassky in Reykjavik. (source: *Chess Life*, March 2021, p. 9)

In 1969, there were 13,000 members in the USCF. By late 1972, there were 34,000 members. (source: *Chess Life & Review*, Nov 1972, p. 671)

On June 17, 1969, Boris Spassky (1937-) won the world chess championship after defeating Tigran Petrosian in Moscow.

On June 9, 1970, the first game between Earth and cosmonauts ended after 35 moves and 6 hours. It was the Soviet ground crew against the cosmonauts of the Soyuz-9 spacecraft.

From 1970 to 1972, Lewis Cohen went 40-0 in National Elementary School Championships. He never lost or drew a game in the National Elementary School Championships. He won the 1974 and 1975 National Junior High School championship. He later quit the game.

In December 1970, Viktor Korchnoi won the 38th Soviet Championship, held in Riga. He was followed by Tukmakov, Stein, Balashov, and Karpov.

In 1971, John Curdo (1931-2022) was the first master to play a computer in a rated tournament, the Greater Boston Open. During his chess career, he won over 1,000 chess tournaments, thought to be a record. He won or tied for 1st in 17 Massachusetts Open championship tournaments. He won the New England Open 7 times. (source: *Chess Life*, Nov 2022, p. 8)

In 1971, Larry Christiansen became the first and only junior high school player to win the National high School Championship. He won the U.S. Junior Championship in 1973, 1974, and 1975. In 1977, he became a grandmaster without having been an International Master first. He was U.S. champion in 1980, 1983, and 2002.

In 1971, Tigran Petrosian lost his Candidates match with Fischer in Buenos Aires. After the match, Petrosian's wife, Rona, blamed Petrosian's loss on his trainer, Alexei Suetin. Rona slapped Suetin's face for his poor analysis after Tigran lost the 6th game.

In 1972, one of the rules in the Fischer-Spassky world chess championship match was that women in the audience could not wear stiletto shoes.

During the 1972 world chess championship, Bobby Fischer received a gift. It was a chess set with the black pieces painted White. The gift was from John Lennon and Yoko Ono. (source: *Chess Life*, Dec 2021, p. 11)

On September 1, 1972, Bobby Fischer (1943-2008) defeated Boris Spassky in Reykjavik to become world chess champion.

In 1973, Boris Spassky won the 41st Soviet Championship, held in Moscow. There was a 5 way tie for 2nd between Karpov, Korchnoi, Kuzmin, Petrosian, and Polugaevsky.

In 1973, Bill Hartston won the British men's chess championship, held in Eastbourne. His wife, Jana Malypetrova, won the British women's championship (they later divorced). Bill won it again in 1975. Jana won it in 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1976, 1977, and 1979.

GM Miguel Quinteros (born in 1947) from Argentina, is married to a former Miss Philippines. In 1973, Quinteros's wife Benjie, was crowned "Miss Philippines, Maid of Cotton." Benjie's sister was Gloria Diaz, Miss Universe in 1969. In 1987, Quinteros was the first grandmaster to visit South Africa in six years. He gave simultaneous exhibitions in South Africa and was barred from FIDE events for three years for playing chess in South Africa that practices Apartheid. Quinteros was the first modern grandmaster to visit Australia.

From 1974 to 1983, all 10 women's championships in India were all won by the Khadilkar sisters. All three were awarded the Women's IM title. Vasanti Khadilkar won 1 championship, Jayshree won 4 championships, and Rohini won 5 championships.

In 1974, Claude Bloodgood (1937-2001) escaped from a chess tournament after he and another fellow inmate chessplayer, Lewis Carpenter, overpowered a guard watching over him. They had received a furlough to play in a local Virginia chess tournament. He was captured a few days later. This ended any further chess organization in the prison. Bloodgood was sentenced to death in 1970 for strangling his mother in 1969. His sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment.

During his 1974 Candidates match (the first ever in the United States) with Mecking in Augusta, Georgia, Viktor Korchnoi received a list of music albums that his 14-year old son, Igor, wanted. Radio station WBBQ provided Viktor with albums that included records by Alice Cooper, the Beatles, Moody Blues, Simon and Garfunkle, the Osmonds, and Brocul Harum. (source: *Aiken Standard*, Jan 29, 1974)

In November 1974, Anatoly Karpov (1951-) defeated Korchnoi in the final Candidates match, held in Moscow.

No world chess champion had taken a clear first place in an international tournament since Alekhine, but Karpov did it 9 times from early 1975 to 1978. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 339)

On June 5, 1975, Paul Keres (1916-1975) died of a heart attack in Helsinki on his way home to Estonia after winning an international tournament (World Class Championship) held at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, British Columbia. At his funeral, there were over 100,000 people at his funeral in Tallinn, Estonia. The National Bank of Estonia issued a 5 krooni note with a portrait of Paul Keres.

In 1975, IM Bernard Zuckerman (born in 1943) was playing in the Cleveland International in Ohio. A spectator became too loud for him and Zuckerman told him to shut up. When the spectator continued to talk loudly, Zuckerman threw a chess piece at him. Zuckerman was reprimanded for his “unsportsmanlike” conduct.

In November 1975, Efim Geller won the Alekhine Memorial International tournament, held in Moscow. He was followed by Spassky, Vaganian, and Korchnoi.

In 1976, Tony Miles (1955-2001) became the first UK-born, over-the-board chess Grandmaster. The first British GM was German-born Jacques Mieses, who was on the original list of grandmasters in 1950. British player Keith Richardson was awarded the GM title before Miles, in 1975, but it was for correspondence chess.

In 1976, the Philippines, Italy, and Uruguay were the only nations to send team to the chess Olympiad in Haifa and the “Against Israel Olympiad” in Tripoli, Libya. The Philippines took 20th place out of 48 countries at Haifa. They took 15th place out of 34 countries in Libya. There wasn’t a single grandmaster that participated in Libya. There were 23 grandmasters at Haifa.

In December 1976, Karpov won the 44th Soviet Championship, held in Moscow. He was followed by Balashov, Petrosian, and Polugaevsky.

In 1977, Mark Diesen (1957-2008), 19, won the World Junior Championship. He was the youngest U.S. player since Fischer to win an international title up to that time. It was the first time an American had won the World Junior Championship since Bill Lombardy in 1957. (source: Chess Life & Review, Feb 1977, p. 70)

In 1978, Niaz Murshed (born in 1966) tied for 1st place in the Bangladesh chess championship at the age of 12, becoming the youngest winner of a national federation. He won the next four Bangladesh championship at age 13, 14, and 15, and 16. He became a grandmaster in 1987. He was the first grandmaster to emerge from South Asia.

In 1978, the World Chess Championship match between Karpov and Korchnoi was played in Baguio City, Philippines. It set a record for worst weather with 20 major storms and 22 inches of rain in a single day. Typhoon Emang knocked out power in the playing hall during the 5th game. (source: *Chess Life*, Nov 1920, p. 10)

In 1979, Cecil Purdy of Australia, the first correspondence world champion, was playing a game of chess in Sydney when he suffered a heart attack. His last words to his son (who was also in the same tournament) were purportedly, “I have a win, but it will take some

time." Another source says that his last words were "I have to seal a move." He died shortly after.

In 1979, Karpov and Tal tied in Montreal. It was the strongest chess tournament in a decade. Korchnoi was not invited. The formal name for the event was "Man and His World Chess Challenge Cup." (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 355)

In 1980, John Litvinchuk (born in 1967) won the first Aspis prize for the best player under 13 in the United States. He was the first person to break Bobby Fischer's record of becoming the youngest master in U.S. history. He became a master at the age of 12 years and 7 months. In 1980, he placed 3rd in the world under-14. He was New York State High School Champion in 1982, 1983, and 1985. In 1982, he was the U.S. High School Champion. In 1986, he was the U.S. Junior Chess Champion.

In November 1980, the Italian chess championship was delayed until 1981 because of a serious earthquake in Naples, Italy that killed 3,000 people. The championship was eventually won by Bela Toth.

In 1981, Cray Blitz became the first computer to win a state championship when it won the championship in Mississippi. In round 4, Cray Blitz beat Joseph Sentef (2262), a medical student and the defending champion and at the time, Mississippi's only chess master. Cray Blitz won all 5 of its games in the tournament for a performance rating of 2258. It was the first tournament game won by a computer over a master. Cray Blitz could examine about 3,000 nodes (positions) per second.

In 1981, Jeremy Silman (1954-2023) won the US Open in Palo Alto, California. He authored over 35 chess books. (source: *Chess Life*, Nov 1923, p. 9)

On Nov 18, 1981, Karpov beat Korchnoi in Mera, Italy, in the world championship match.

In 1982, the Israel Chess Championship was stopped in the middle of the tournament as several of its participants were called up for army service in the war against Lebanon.

In 1982, Yasser Seirawan became the first American to beat a reigning world champion in a tournament since Arthur Dake defeated Alexander Alekhine in Pasadena in 1932. Seirawan defeated Anatoly Karpov in London.

In 1982, the Belle computer was confiscated by the U. S. State Department at Kennedy Airport while it was on its way to the USSR to compete in a computer chess tournament. The shipping of the computer was considered to be an illegal transfer of advanced technology to a foreign country. It took over a month and a \$600 fine to get Belle out of customs.

In 1982, the USSR reported 83 million Soviet citizens engaged in more than 70 forms of sport. 3.6 million were engaged in chess. Moscow had over 71,000 people playing chess. Leningrad reported that more than 32,000 played chess in their city. At the time, there

were 48 Soviet GMs, 49 International Masters, and 700 masters. In one year, 200,000 new people had become involved with chess. Over 14,000 new tournament directors were trained and over 200 new chess clubs opened. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 369)

In 1983, Orson Welles (1915-1985) narrated the first VHS video chess cassette (How to Play Chess), a two-hour program also starring Yasser Seirawan and Larry Christiansen. In 1971 Welles starred in *A Safe Place*, in which he plays chess in Central Park with Tuesday Weld sitting by him.

In 1983, Walter Tevis wrote the novel, *The Queen's Gambit*. In 2020, the novel was turned into a movie on Netflix and was a big hit. The movie had about 350 unique chess positions in the scenes. (source: *Chess Life*, Nov 2020, p. 30)

In 1983, Larry Tamarkin (1956-2021) was the most active tournament player in America, playing 495 rated games. He was manager of both the Manhattan Chess Club and the Marshall Chess Club. (source: *Chess Life*, March 1992, p. 6)

The 1984 chess Olympiad was supposed to have been played in Indonesia, but they withdrew their support due to reduced oil revenues that would have paid for the event. The 26th Chess Olympiad was eventually held in Thessaloniki, Greece.

In June 1984, the USSR vs. Rest of the World match was played in London. USSR won 21 to 19.

From September 19, 1984 to February 15, 1985, the World Championship match between Anatoly Karpov (1951-) and Garry Kasparov (1963-) was played in Moscow. It was called off after 48 games. Karpov was leading 5 games to 3 at the time.

In 1985, Garry Kasparov became the youngest world chess champion at age 22 years and 210 days.

In 1985, Viktor Korchnoi (1931-2016) claimed that he started a chess game with the ghost of Geza Maroczy (1870-1951). The game lasted until 1993, when Korchnoi won after 47 moves. The game was played through a "medium" named Robert Rollans (1914-1993). Rollans recorded Maroczy's moves by automatic writing. He did not know how to play chess at the beginning of the match, but was taught the game during the match.

On November 9, 1985, Kasparov became world champion after beating Karpov in Moscow.

In 1986, 10 year-old Heidi Cuellar became the youngest participant of the chess Olympiad, held in Dubai, when she played on the Guatemala women's team as board 3. She played 9 games, winning 2, drawing 3, and losing 4. The Guatemalan women's team took 36th out of 49 teams. At the same event, the Guatemala men's team consisted of four brothers.

In 1986, from the efforts of Steve Doyle (1959-), USCF president from 1984 to 1987, the U.S. Chess Hall of Fame was created at USCF headquarters in New Windsor, New York. It later moved to Miami, and then to St. Louis.

In April 1986, Vitaly Tseshkovsky (1944-2011) won the 53rd Soviet Championship, held in Kiev. It was reported that the 18 players in the tournament was exposed to the aftereffects of the Chernobyl nuclear accident. He died of a heart attack on Dec 24, 1985 while at the chessboard participating in a tournament. (source: Soltis, *Soviet Chess*, p. 397)

On October 9, 1986, Kasparov defeated Karpov for the world championship, held in London and Leningrad.

On August 27, 1986, GM Georgy Agzamov (1954-1986) had just finished a chess tournament in Sevastopol in the Crimea. He was accidentally killed when he went hiking and fell off a cliff and became trapped between two rocks. Several people heard his cries for help, but he was too deep down, and by the time rescue crews got to him, it was too late. He was the first GM from Uzbekistan.

February 14, 1987, several of the world's top grandmasters met at Brussels to organize the Grandmasters Association (GMA). Kasparov was selected as president and Karpov as vice president.

In 1987, Grandmaster Tony Miles (1955-2001) was arrested at 10 Downing Street in London after trying to get in after midnight to talk to British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher about payments owed to him by the British Chess Federation. He was eventually hospitalized for two months from a mental breakdown.

In 1987, Leisure Linc, an early on-line "internet" company was formed. It was the first national online chess bulletin board system (BBS) and was run out of Greensboro, NC. Leisure Linc later became the USA Today (USAT) Sport Center in 1989. The cost was \$5 an hour to be online. CompuServe was charging 25 cents a minute to be online, so LINC was cheaper.

In 1987, Frank P. Sanford Jr created the Samford Fellowship for assisting the most promising young chess masters in the United States. The first recipient was Joel Benjamin. The Samford Fellowship has awarded over \$2 million since 1987. The total value of the Fellowship is now worth \$60,000 annually. (source: *Chess Life*, April 2021, p. 8 and *Chess Life*, July 2021, p. 14)

In 1987, Harold J. Winston (1945-2021) was elected president of the US Chess Federation. He was president until 1990. He spent more than 30 years as the chairman of the USCF Bylaws Committee. He was president of the Intercollegiate Chess League of America (CCLA) from 1969 into the 1990s. (source: *Chess Life*, April 2021, p. 13)

On Dec 19, 1987, the world chess championship was held in Seville between Kasparov and Karpov. The match was a tie and Kasparov retained his world champion title.

In 1988, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1902-1989) allowed chess to be played in Iran after banning it for nine years. It was banned because it was thought that chess encouraged gambling, that it hurts memory and may be the cause of brain damage.

In 1988, a chess computer beat GM Bent Larsen at the American Open. It was the first time a computer beat a grandmaster in classical play.

In 1988, the 55th Soviet Championship was held in Moscow. Kasparov and Karpov tied. Neither one lost a game.

In 1988, the first official FIDE Blitz World Championship was held in St. John Newfoundland. It was won by Mikhail Tal, age 52. (source: *Chess Life*, March 2023, p. 42)

In 1989, the longest chess game was played. It lasted 269 moves between Ivan Nikolic and Goran Arsovic in Belgrade. The game lasted over 20 hours and ended in a draw.

In 1989 Stuart Rachels tied for first place in the 1989 U.S. Chess Championship at age 20. He earned an International Master (IM) title from that event. He gave up chess at age 23. (source: *Chess Life*, September 2020, p. 44)

Fred Cramer (1912-1989) was the former USCF Membership chairman and USCF President (1960-1963). He graduated with an MBA from Harvard. He was a lighting engineer and contractor. When he died, he bequeathed \$250,000 to the American Chess Foundation. (source: *New York Times*, Apr 21, 1989)

In 1990 Bogdan Szetela noticed a car drive by that looked like his that had been stolen 11 days earlier. But this car had a taxi light on top and "Crescent Cab Co." painted on the side. Spotting a police officer, he told the cop that the cab was his stolen car. Police weren't convinced until he told them that he left a chess set in the trunk before it was stolen. The police popped the trunk and found the chess set.

In 1990, Glenn Petersen (1949-2021) was the chess editor of *Chess Life*. He was its editor on and off through 2006. He worked with the USCF from 1969 to 2017. (source: *Chess Life*, Nov 2021, p.9)

From October to December 1990, the world chess championship was played in New York and Lyons. Kasparov defeated Karpov to remain world champion.

In 1991, the Raging Rooks, a chess team at Adam Clayton Powell Junior High School in Harlem, tied for 1st place in the U.S. Junior Chess Championship in Michigan, ahead of 60 other junior high school teams. When they returned to New York, Bob Guccione (1930-2010), publisher of *Penthouse*, threw a victory party for them in his Upper East Side town house with his indoor pool. Guccione helped pay for their trip to the nationals in Dearborn, Michigan. The team's coach was future grandmaster Maurice Ashley, the first and only African-American grandmaster.

In 1992, Rea B. Hayes (1915-2021) won the Tennessee state chess championship at the age of 76. (source: *Chess Life*, March 2022, p. 11)

The 30th Chess Olympiad was held in Manila in June 1992. It was the first to have multiple teams from the former Soviet Union. Instead of 1 USSR team, there were 12 teams from the former Soviet Union. They took the Gold (Russia), Silver (Uzbekistan), and Bronze (Armenia) and none of these ex Soviet Union countries had a minus score. The USA took 4th place with three former Soviet players (Kamsky, Yermolinsky, and Gulko). 102 teams participated in the men's event and 62 teams participated in the women's event. Yemen and Kenya had teams, but they did not arrive. There were 617 players, including 117 grandmasters. Vladimir Kramnik, only a FIDE master, had the best rating performance – 2958, followed by Kasparov – 2908. Kasparov won the gold for top board 1. For the first time since 1939, there was an all-German team instead of a West German team and an East German team.

In June 1993, a Bosnia-Herzegovina chess player was shot and killed by a sniper. This was perhaps the first time a chess player died by sniper fire.

In 1994, Joseph Neale was a postal worker who was dismissed from a part-time city job coach coaching chess as a community center in Riverside, California. He went postal and took his grudge to City Hall where he shot the mayor, three members of the Council, and two policemen in 1998. 11 other people sustained minor injuries from flying glass. None of the shots were fatal.

On August 22, 1995, Gilles Andruet (1958-1995), the 1988 French chess champion and International Master (1982), was murdered. His body was found on the shores of the Yvette river in Saulx-les-Chartreux. He had been beaten to death and put in a plastic bag over some gambling debts. His father was the famous rally-car driver, Jean-Claude Andruet.

In 1996, Yoko Ono (1933-) donated \$2,500 to enable the Edward R. Murrow High School chess team in Brooklyn, New York, to attend the state and national championships. The school had been national champions in 1992, 1993, and 1994, but had no funds in 1995 and 1996.

Norwegian GM Simen Agdestein is a grandson of runner and botanist Reidar Jorgensen. In October 1996, Simen married Marianne Aasen (1967-), a member of Parliament and Norwegian politician for the Labour Party. The couple had 2 children. They separated in 2008.

On February 16, 1997, Alvis Vitolins (1946-1997), Latvian International Master, committed suicide by jumping onto the frozen ice of the Gauja river from a railway bridge. He was only 50.

In March 1997, 13-year-old John Slack was beat up and sent to a hospital in critical condition. He was beaten up by his 15-year-old chess opponent, Joshua Simms, during a Junior High chess game, who had just lost a chess game. Simms was arrested on an assault charge and suspended from school for 5 days. [source: "Fight Over Junior High Chess Game Leaves Boy in Coma; Opponent Arrested," *spokesman.com*, March 20, 1997]

In August, 1998, China hosted the Women's Candidates Final Match between Russian GM Alisa Galliamova and GM Xie Jun. Galliamova refused to play as she objected that the entire match was scheduled to be played in China. However, China was the only country to bid for the match. The match was declared forfeited to Xie Jun.

In 1998, Alexei Shirov (1972-) won a match against Vladimir Kramnik to qualify as challenger for the classical world championship match with Garry Kasparov. The match, scheduled for 2000, never took place due to lack of sponsorship. Shirov never won a single game against Kasparov in 20 years of encounters. Kasparov beat Shirov 17 times, with 15 draws and no losses.

On May 17, 1999, GM (1990) Lembit Oll (1966-1999) committed suicide by jumping out of a 5th floor window of his apartment in Tallinn at the age of 33. He suffered from severe depression after his wife divorced him. He is buried at Metsakalmistu Cemetery in Tallinn.

In 2000, Laurence Douglas of Poughkeepsie, New York, stabbed Craig Williams to death over a chess game. Williams had just beaten Douglas in a chess game that had a \$5 wager. Williams took a \$5 bill from Douglas after the game. Douglas then pulled out a knife and stabbed Williams 16 times.

In 2001, the Scottish Chess Association merged with the Scottish Junior Chess Association to become Chess Scotland.

In 2001, researchers wrote in *Nature* magazine that a chess grandmaster studies and practices for at least 10 years to learn more than 100,000 chess patterns (memory chunks). Consequently, GMs can 'recognize' the key elements in a problem situation much more rapidly than amateurs. (source: "Pattern of focal gamma-bursts in chess players," *Nature*, Vol. 412, No. 603, Aug 9, 2001)

On February 1, 2002, the Manhattan Chess Club closed. It existed for 124 years, the second-oldest chess club in the United States (next to the Mechanics' Institute Chess Club in San Francisco). Its last president was Jeff Kossak.

In 2002, Dutch GM Loek van Wely was driving on the autobahn heading for a chess tournament in his brand new Jaguar X. He lost control of the vehicle and flipped the car over while driving around 100 mph. The car was totaled, but "Lucky Loek" walked away with only a mild concussion. This was the third car he had totaled in 5 years. No one in the Netherlands wants to be a passenger with van Wely. (source: *chessbase.com*, Nov 27, 2011)

In 2003, Svetozar Gligoric (1923-2012), two weeks away from his 80th birthday, was attacked in his sleep in Belgrade by masked burglars who tied him up and took his money, jewelry (his wife had recently died), chess trophies, and a silver chess set. Gligoric won the Yugoslav nationals championship 12 times and played for Yugoslavia in 15 chess Olympiads, winning 12 medals.

On October 31, 2004, the 36th Chess Olympiad was held at Mallorca. 1st-Ukraine; 2nd-Russia; 3rd-Armenia. The Chinese women's team took 1st place at the 36th Chess Olympiad, held in Calvia, Spain. The USA took 2nd place. The Chinese men's team took 24th place. Prior to the closing ceremony, FIDE vice-president Zurab Azmaiparashvili was roughed up and arrested as he attempted to ascend the stage to give out the Nona Gaprindashvili Trophy.

On March 14, 2005, IM (1977) Simon Webb (1949-2005) was stabbed to death by his son, Dennis, in Sweden after returning home from a chess tournament. His son was arrested after he tried to commit suicide by driving his car into a building.

In 2005, Alex Dunne (1942-2023) became Correspondence Chess Director for the USCF. He maintained that position until 2020. He began the correspondence chess column in *Chess Life* in December 1981. (source: *Chess Life*, April 2023, p. 10)

Herbert Mois Avram (1913-2006) was an American chess master. He won the Virginia State Championship three straight times from 1952 to 1954. He was Maryland State Champion twice, in 1955 and 1979. He was a decorated World War II veteran. He was a Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He worked for the NSA and the CIA as a government analyst. The sensitive nature of his intelligence work meant that he could never be alone with Soviet chess players in chess tournaments or at chess clubs. He left government service to follow his interests in the digital court reporting market in the early 1960s. He founded Stenocomp Corporation. He pioneered what is known as Closed Captions as seen on television. He was a member of Mensa. (source: *The Washington Post*, Jan 22, 2006)

In 2006, the Ripley's — Believe It or Not website published the fact that chess champion Susan Polgar played 1,131 games of chess and won 1,112 of them over a 17-hour period in August 2005. Believe it or not, Susan was unaware of the Ripley addition about her chess until 2009 until someone sent her a link to the Ripley website. (source: *Susan Polgar Global Chess Daily*, May 27, 2009)

In 2006, Magnus Carlsen won the Norwegian chess championship on tie breaks. That was his only win of his national championship.

In 2007, \$73,000 was donated on behalf of a chess program and team at an elementary school in Washington, D.C. It turned out that the school business manager who handled the funds was a thief. The business manager ripped off most of the \$73,000 that was supposed to go to the chess program. The person used the school's ATM card more than 100 times to steal from the chess fund. When the pillage was discovered, the school security and the

police were immediately notified, but the authorities did little or nothing until an anonymous tipster told the D.C. government's inspector general about the missing money. Before the plundering, the money was used to fund 12 Washington D.C. kids to Nashville to take part in the national scholastic chess tournament. The children of the chess team never competed in another tournament after the theft of their funds.

48 Hours is a CBS TV news magazine program. On December 1, 2007, an episode called "Capture the Queen" appeared on *48 Hours*. "Brooke Henson" told friends that she was a professional chess player. The real Brooke Henson went missing in 1999. Esther Reed (1978-) stole her identity and played competitive chess. (source: Stasi, "How Did She Do It?" *New York Post*, Dec 1, 2000)

On January 17, 2008, GM (1958) Robert Fischer (1943-2008) died from degenerative renal failure at the Landspítali Hospital in Reykjavik, Iceland at the age of 64. He had a blocked urinary tract and refused surgery or medications that would have prevented an early death. He is buried at a small Christian cemetery of Laugardaelir church, outside the town of Selfoss, Iceland, 30 miles from Reykjavik.

In 2008, the Saint Louis Chess Club opened. It has hosted over 1,500 tournaments since then. Over 70,000 rated games have been played there, with over 36,000 chess players participating in its events. (source: *Chess Life*, Sep 2020, p. 6)

In February 2009, a man killed a friend with a sword after a chess game in Alameda, California. An argument broke out during their game, and the two started wrestling. Joseph Groom retreated to his bedroom and returned with a sword, which he used to stab Kelly Kjersem once. Kjersem later died.

On May 8, 2010, Andor Lilienthal (born on May 11, 1911) died in Budapest three days after his 99th birthday. At the time of his death, he was the world's oldest grandmaster.

In 2011, the French Chess Federation suspended two Grandmasters and one International Master, finding them "guilty of a violation of sporting ethics" for allegedly cheating during the 2010 Chess Olympiad in Khanty-Mansiysk. They may have been texting each other chess moves on their mobile phones.

In 2011, the World Chess Hall of Fame was relocated from Miami to St. Louis. They have put on over 50 exhibitions since then. (source: *Chess Life*, Feb 2022, p. 46)

On July 15, 2012, chess patroness Jacqueline Piatigorsky (1911-2012) died at the age of 100. She died in Brentwood, Los Angeles. She was married to cellist Gregor Piatigorsky. She played in several U.S. Women's Championships. In 1961, she sponsored a chess match between Fischer and Reshevsky. She asked Fischer to rearrange his schedule and play his match game earlier so she could attend the match and her husband's concert later that evening. Fischer refused to play earlier and was forfeited.

In May 2013, GM Lothar Schmid died in Bamberg, Germany. He co-owned the Karl May Press. When he died, it was reputed that he owned the largest private chess library in the world,

On August 8, 2013, Russian Grandmaster Igor Kurnosov, age 28, was hit by a car as he was crossing the street in Chelyabinsk and died at the scene of the accident. He was one of the top 20 GMs in Russia, rated 2680 at his peak.

In January 2014, an Italian man, Saverio Bellante, who had been living in a rented home in Dublin, killed his landlord over a game of chess. He was arrested for the killing after stabbing his landlord, Tom O’Gorman, multiple times. O’Gorman was a minister. Bellante told police that they were fighting over a chess game. Bellante was then asked by O’Gorman to leave the house following an argument over a chess move. Instead, Bellante found a kitchen knife and stabbed O’Gorman, then beat him over the head with a dumbbell. Bellante was also accused of eating the heart of his victim.

In 2014, actress Viola Davis (1965-) donated \$30,000 to the chess club at Central Falls High School in Rhode Island. (source: Randall, "Oscar Nominated Actress Viola Davis Donates Money to Chess," *Chess Daily News*, Jan 9. 2014)

On January 28, 2015, Erich Spielman, age 92, was struck by a car driven by another 92-year-old in England and died. He was a chess player (winner of several club championships in Loughton) and the nephew of the famous chess player Rudolf Spielmann.

In 2016, the United States won this year's Baku Olympiad after edging out Ukraine on tiebreak. Rating-wise Russia was the top seed, but again they failed to win. With three top-10 players on the team (Hikaru Nakamura, Fabiano Caruana and Wesley So), the U.S. team won by scoring 20 match points from 11 rounds and not losing a single match.

In 2017, grandmaster Zhang Zhong of Singapore and his wife, Woman International Master Li Roufan, were banned from the Asian Zonals. They refused to sign and ratify the Singapore Federation Players Agreement. The couple had 3 days to sign it, and they refused due to the rush and that the agreement was too complicated, with too many clauses, and they needed more time.

Leela Chess Zero is a free, open-source, deep neural network-based chess engine that was released on Jan 9, 2018. It starts with no chess knowledge except for the basic rules of the game. It then learns how to play chess by reinforcement learning from repeated self-play. As of December 2022, it has played over 1.5 billion chess games against itself, playing around 1 million games a day. Its Elo rating is over 3900.

In 2019, Moscow’s Central Chess Club held a unique tournament. To enter, you could not be an atheist. 31 players participated that represented 8 different religions.

In October 2019, international chess player Rajkumar was accidentally electrocuted in his house, which was under construction. He was pulling an iron rod when it touched a wire

carrying 1,100 kilovolts of electric current. Rajkumar was a chess coach and an international arbiter. [source: *Hindustan Times*, Oct 26, 2019]

On October 12, 2019, Michael Abron played in the National Chess Day tournament in Anchorage, Alaska. It was his 50th and final state and played in a USCF-rated tournament in all 50 states. (source: *Chess Life*, May 1920, p.8)

In 2020, Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders had a telecom, with Sanders broadcasting live from his home office. A chess set was behind Sanders. At the end of the conversation Sanders challenged Biden to a chess game and that they should play a chess match. (source: *Mother Jones*, April 13, 2020)

On April 20, 2020, former USCF President Don Schultz (1936-2020) died of COVID-19. He was president of the USCF from 1996 to 1999. He had been President of the New York State Chess Association (1964-1965), the North Carolina Chess Association (1966-1971), the Georgia Chess Association (1977-1979), and the Florida Chess Association (1987-1993). (source: *Chess Life*, June 2020, p. 12)

In May 2020, world champion Magnus Carlsen won \$70,000 in the richest online chess tournament ever, called the Magnus Carlsen Invitational. The total prize fund was \$250,000. [source: Morse, "Magnus Carlsen wins \$70,000 as he triumphs in richest online chess tournament ever," *CNN*, May 5, 2020]

In 2020, John D. Rockefeller V donated \$3 million to US Chess. (source: *Chess Life*, Dec 2020, p. 26)

In 2020, 12-year-old Mark Chess became the youngest Hawaii state chess champion. (source: *Chess Life*, Nov 2020, p. 6)

On June 20, 2021, Abhimanyu Mishra (born Feb 5, 2009) became a grandmaster at the age of 12 years, 4 months, and 25 days. He beat Sergey Karjakin's record of 12 years and 7 months, which Sergey did in 2002. He was America's youngest Expert at the age of 7 years, 6 months, and 22 days. He was America's youngest master at the age of 9 years, 2 months, and 17 days. He was the world's youngest International Master at the age of 10 years, 9 months, and 20 days. (source: *Chess Life*, Oct 2020, p. 30 and *Chess Life*, Sep 2021, p.13).

In 2021, GM Nona Gaprindashvili (1941-) was mentioned in the Netflix series *The Queen's Gambit*. There was a scene in which it was incorrectly stated that she had never played competitive chess against men. Gaprindashvili said that this departure from reality was "dishonoring misinformation." She filed a lawsuit against Netflix for \$5 million for false invasion of privacy and defamation. In September 2022, Netflix settled with Gaprindashvili for an unknown amount.

The 2023 World Chess Championship Match is the 4th world championship match without a defending champion.

There are 32 women grandmasters.

In 2022, there were 1,721 grandmasters.

In 2023, Donald Trump was selling digital NFT trading cards. One depicted him as the king in a golden chess set.

In 2023, 22-year old Vaishali Rameshbabu of India, and her younger brother, 18-year-old Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa, have become the first-ever Grandmaster brother-sister pair in history. There are 84 chess grandmasters in India.

In 2023, the Norwegian tax registry recently released the personal wealth of GM Magnus Carlsen. It comes to 100 million krone (NOK), or 8.6 million British pounds, or 10,787,840 US dollars.

In August 2023, Lithuanian GM Paulius Pultinevicius won the International Prix Mohammed VI tournament in Casablanca, Morocco. He scored 7.5 out of 9. The winners, the arbiters, and the tournament director are still waiting to be paid and release of the winners' prizes, which has been withheld by the Moroccan Chess Federation. Some checks were presented to the hotel of the event, but the checks bounced.

In 2023, GM Wesley So played 72 classical chess games and drew 83% of his games. By comparison, Magnus Carlsen has drawn 43% of his games this year. Nakamura and Caruana have drawn less than 70% of their 2023 games.

FIDE classical ratings for December 2023: Carlsen (2830), Caruana (2794), Nakamura (2788), Ding (2780), Nepomniachtchi (2771), Firouzja (2763), Giri (2754), So (2752), Karjakin (2750), Anand (2748)

Over 600 million people play chess regularly.

The Shannon number is the number of all possible moves in a chess game. The number is 100 raised to 111th power.

Max Euwe and Bobby Fischer each won their national championship 8 times. This is the most wins of a national championship.

William Steinitz, Emanuel Lasker, and Jose Capablanca never won a national championship.

Hikaru Nakamura's first name is Christopher. Magnus Carlsen's first name is Sven.

Judit Polgar was the first woman to win a game against a reigning world chess champion.

The Jewel Royale Chess Set is the most expensive chess set ever made. It is worth \$4 million. It is made of white gold, 500-carat diamonds, and royal blue sapphire.

Avhimanyu Mishra holds the record for youngest grandmaster at 12 years and 4 months.

Anand is the first Asian world chess champion.

It is possible to have 18 queens on the board at the same time.

It is possible to have a maximum of 10 knights on a chess board at the same time.

GM Alik Gershon holds the record of the most number of simultaneous games played – 686.